Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English Language and Literature

Dissertation

Academic Master

Domain: Letters and Foreign Languages

Field: Translation and Translation Studies (English-Arabic)

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Title:

Arabic Localization of Video Games

Case Study: PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the

Requirements for the Master Degree in Translation Studies

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Academic Year: 2019/2020

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved mother.

My respectful father.

To my whole family.

To Mr. Ammi Said Said my wise high school teacher.

And to all the teachers I was once their student.

Mohammed Amine Nedjar

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved mother.

To my father – to whom I promised to dedicate this dissertation before he left this world.

To my brother and sisters.

To all my great teachers.

To my best friends.

To all who have helped me in one way or another in my arduous journey.

Mohammed Fatah Belmabedi

Acknowledgements

Foremost, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to our thesis supervisor Miss. Leila Yahiaoui for her valuable guidance, encouragement, patience, and insightful comments.

Besides our advisor, we would like to thank the rest of our thesis committee: Dr. Saadoun Farida the Chairman and Mr. Hemza Zeghar the Examiner, for their encouragement, insightful comments, and debatable questions.

To all our teachers who helped us throughout the course of our study at Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla.

Our deepest thanks go to the staff of the English Department.

We are deeply thankful to every person who has helped us in this work.

We are also extremely appreciative and thankful for the participants, who were so generous with their time in completing the survey, and for their willingness to share their experience.

We really hope that this thesis will be useful for everyone who is interested in Translation studies and in Video Games Localization in particular.

Finally, we acknowledge that this thesis is written by ourselves alone. Any information or ideas from other sources have been cited in-text and acknowledged in the reference list accordingly.

List of Abbreviations

BUBG**:** PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS

ST**:** ST

TT**:** Target Text

Sim-Ship: Simultaneous Shipment

OV: Original Version

TV: Target Version

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Abstract

Video games have been an irresistible type of entertainment in the Arab world ever since the emergence of PCs, Consoles, and smart Phones, and yet they remain the most favourite one to young Arabs nowadays.

Although most video games are developed in English, yet the desire to expand to new markets have led most developers to localize their games into many target language versions. This has brought about the emergence of a new field in translation, game localization, which combines elements of screen translation and software localization. Even though the practice of localizing video games has undergone remarkable transformations over the years. Nonetheless, only a few localization research is conducted in the Arab world. This study highlights the unique aspects of video game localization. It provides a straightforward view of Arabic localization, by considering localization processes, and by attempting to understand how the localized product is perceived by its target audience. Using as a case study the phenomenon that took the world of interactive entertainment by storm in 2017, PUBG, examples are presented to illustrate the challenges game localizers face, focusing precisely on linguistic, terminology, and technical issues.

الملخص

تتطرق الدراسة الحالية إلى توطين ألعاب الفيديو، حيث أن ألعاب الفيديو عرفت رواجا كبيرا في العالم العربي منذ اكتشاف الحواسيب ومنصات الألعاب والهواتف الذكية ومازالت تلقى رواجا إلى يومنا هذا كأحد أبرز وسائل الترفيه في القرن الواحد والعشرين.

إن أغلب ألعاب الفيديو يتم تطويرها وإنتاجها باللغة الإنجليزية، إلا أن الرغبة الملحة لولوج الأسواق العالمية جعل مطوري ألعاب الفيديو يقومون بتوطين هاته الأخيرة إلى عدة لغات أخرى وهذا ما أدى إلى ظهور ميدان جديد في دراسات الترجمة ألا وهو توطين ألعاب الفيديو والذي يجمع بين ترجمة الشاشة وتوطين البرامج. عرف هذا المجال الجديد من الترجمة تطورا سريعا عبر السنين إلا أن عدد البحوث المتعلقة بهذا المجال في العالم العربي يكاد أن يكون منعدما.

تتطرق هاته الدراسة إلى أهم ما يميز توطين ألعاب الفيديو عن بقية أنواع الترجمة التقليدية، كما تتطرق إلى إجراءات التوطين إلى اللغة العربية سعيا لتذليل عملية التوطين وفهم كيف يستقبل الفرد العربي المنتوج المعرب.

في هاته الدراسة تم اختيار اللعبة الشهيرة (ببجي) والتي عرفت رواجا كبيرا في عالم ألعاب الفيديو سنة 2017 كعينة للدراسة حيث تم استخراج أمثلة من هاته الأخيرة بغية توضيح الصعوبات التي قد تواجه المترجم والتي تتعلق أساسا باللغة والمصطلحات والمسائل الفنية.

Keywords: Video Game Localization, Translation, Screen Translation, Arabic Localization, Software Localization, Interactive Entertainment.

الكلمات المفتاحية: توطين ألعاب الفيديو، الترجمة ، ترجمة الشاشة ، التوطين إلى العربية ، توطين البرامج ، وسائل الترفيه التفاعلية .

Introduction

Ever since “Tennis for Two” was released in 1958 as one of the very first video games, the public interest in this form of digital entertainment has grown considerably. The technology used to play video games has changed drastically, from enormous consoles and computers that play games through cartridges or floppy disks to the cutting edge technology of virtual reality that immerse players in a virtual world. Nevertheless, the demand for video games has always been high. Video game developers are required to adopt an international approach to the development of their video games, which results in localization. In this context, Chandler and Deming (2012) make a distinction between internationalization and localization, both of which are crucial terms for grasping the details of the complex process of localizing a video game for a foreign market. “Internationalization means creating a product that can be easily adapted for release in other countries without having to change the design of the product,” whereas the subsequent process of localization focuses on “translating the language assets in a game into other languages”. These language assets do not only entail the in-game texts, they could also refer to, for example, the localization team might resort to the redesigning of the characters meet with the target culture in addition to just translating the in-game texts. Moreover, whenever problems arise with regard to the target culture, for instance due to potentially offensive or inappropriate elements in the source version, the localization team could choose to omit those in the translation or decide to change the visuals of the target version. In short, if the internationalization process is done adequately enough, the localization process may proceed more smoothly, since the localization team will hardly encounter any issues regarding in-game or in-engine assets, such as an unclear user interface or insufficient space for the translated texts. However, they focused on the localization process but did not elaborate on the crucial role of translation in localizing a video game. The connection between video game

localization and translation studies has received little attention in the academic world. Video game translation demands a different approach than, for example, literary translation. In video games, the main aspect is the overall game experience where the player is actively involved in the game and in control of how the game progresses. Unlike novels, films, and series. Video games require a certain degree of user involvement. Therefore, while translating, a similar experience must be recreated for the target user.

Mangiron & O'Hagan state:

> No oddities should be present to disturb the interactive game experience, and this is the reason why game localizers are granted quasi absolute freedom to modify, omit, and even add any elements which they deem necessary to bring the game closer to the players and to convey the original feel of gameplay. And doing so, the traditional concept of fidelity to the original is discarded. In game localization, Transcreation, rather than just translation, takes place. (20)

Transcreation is a translation model that clearly differentiate video game translation from other types of translation.

As most of the industries in the 21 century, the video games industry has witnessed a significant increase in popularity. Thus, the race to produce games with higher quality, better gameplay, and epic storylines has become a necessity to compete in the current busy video game market. For instance, the budget of a Triple A games such as KONAMI'S Metal Gear can cost up to 80 million Dollars. Therefore, in order to assure that such an investment would repay the costs and achieve revenues, the game must make a high rate of sales in the global market. Localizing a video game offers a wide variety of languages accessible to a wide segment of players around the globe.

1.1 Aim of the Study

In this study, we shall discuss the complexity behind the localization of video games, shedding the light on the process, by providing examples from PUBG as a case of study; we shall tackle the challenges associated with video game localization.

This study also aims to draw the line between video games localization and other forms of translation and to explore the unique challenges that may arise and how to deal with them.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The term localization is vast and is not limited only to translating the textual material within the games, but it extends to be a part of the development process. For instance, if some modules are integrated in the game it may expose a fragment of player base to content that might make the player react negatively to the game. To name but a few: sexually explicit or religiously unacceptable.

With that in mind, the main research question of this study would be as follows:

1.3 Research Questions

Main questions:

The large amounts of money and efforts went to localizing **PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS LITE** into Arabic, some players still prefer to play the game in its original version. Why so?

Sub-questions:

How to maintain the original game experience of the game undergoing the localization process without causing a clash with the intended market?

What are the difficulties that may be encountered while translating textual material within the game?

What are the non-textual material that may cause challenges to arise while localizing video games?

1.4 Hypotheses

1) Not hiring an expert localizer cannot assure localization quality of the game before release and might lead to unexpected clash within local player base.
2) Time and space constraints when dealing with subtitling.
3) The challenges that may arise while localizing non-textual material mainly is related to cultural norms.

1.5 Methodology

For the purposes of this study, a combination of the quantitative and qualitative approaches is used to facilitate the analysis and reach answers to the research questions. Thus to say a quantitative approach is used in the survey and followed up with a qualitative approach to interpret the finding.

Data collection

The data used in the analysis was gathered mainly from the following sources:

Survey: conducting a survey with random Arab players to gain a clear view from the player's scope.

The game: playing the actual game in both versions, taking screenshots and notes in order to compare them later on.

The data collected (textual material) from the game is compared to highlight the translation strategies used in the localization of this video game. Along with its specific challenges.

The official website: the website of PUBG is used to provide textual material used for the purpose of comparison

Selecting the Samples

The participants in the online survey are selected randomly and they are mainly from Arab world.

PUBG was selected to be our case study mainly for the two following reasons:

First, the Popularity of the game around the world generally and among Arab players in particular, PUBG has set the bases for a new genre of video games, which is battle royal. The game was an instant and massive success. Moreover, the game is multiplayer game and involves a mix of numerous genres such as action, strategy, and first/ third shooter.

Secondly, the fact that the game was already localized into Arabic, which makes it a highly suitable ground for our research.

Not the mention the amount of textual material that was made available on the official website and in-the game, which can be easily accessible.

The selection of samples from the game and from its official website is based on their relevance to the hypothesis being tested while some examples are selected to highlight the strategies adopted while translating the texts.

A good translation should be linguistically and stylistically correct and culturally appropriate, with that in mind we selected examples that do not meet with the above-mentioned characteristics.

Data Analysis techniques

The analysis will be carried out on both the survey and textual material from the game using the mixed approach; the descriptive analysis is employed to analyze the data from the online survey, while the comparative analysis is employed to analyze the textual material obtained from the original game and the localized game which will eventually help interpreting the result.

1.6 Thesis Structure

In what follows, a brief outline of the Study's contents is presented. The study consists of three chapters. Chapter One serves as background information that is essential for the study, identifies a gap in existing research, expounds the aims and objectives of this thesis, and presents the previous studies in the field of video game localization from leading scholars in the field. Chapter Two explores the ins and outs of video game localization presented in a diachronic study starting from the early stages of software localization to the current practice of video game localization, as we know it nowadays.

This chapter also deals with the unique aspects and features of video game localization and challenges that may arise in the process of localization.

Chapter Three serves as the practical analysis of PUBG, in which we compared the two versions of the video game, emphasizing on three main aspects: linguistic, terminology, and technical.

Finally, this chapter also summarizes the findings of the analysis. and attempts generalizations about the prevailing trends.

Chapter 1 : Literature Review

Since our research paper focuses on video localization, therefore it is necessary to have an overview on the concept itself and what lies beneath it. Video game localization is a new emerging subfield within the field of translation, specifically from the audiovisual translation. Video game localization is not as simple as transferring texts from a language to another since there are several different elements which need to be adapted in order to fulfil a complete and appropriate translation as well as the restrictions that hinder the translator's job.

Unlike plays and films, poetry, songs, novels, and other entertainment products. Video games have a rather short history. Nevertheless, and despite its somewhat clumsy beginnings, interactive entertainment has found a way to adapt into a wide variety of market places, and rocketing its returns beyond all other entertainment products. This success story was fully dependent, and is linked to the success story of the game localization profession that had to be created from scratch in order to cover the unprecedented demands of multimedia interactive products. Numerous researches have been conducted on video games from the point of view of ludology (Frasca) and studies have been published focusing on the localization process and workflows (Chandler). As long as Translation Studies is concerned, many scholars have tackled video games as an area of research in their studies (Bernal, Mangiron & O'Hagan). This can be regarded as an emerging field now based on the number of workshops and international symposiums where this topic is regularly addressed. However, the true potential of video games and the possibilities they can pose for research in translation related issues have not been fully approached yet: the relation between audiovisual translation and video games can be further studied, as the introduction of voice over, dubbing, subtitling and lip-sync techniques are to be

analyzed. Similarly, the question of accessibility in audiovisual translation can also be applied to the case of electronic entertainment (Orero; Tercedor).

Scholars such as Minako O'Hagan, Carmen Mangiron, and Miguel Bernal-Merino have begun to establish video games as a new area of research within translation studies, which helped shaping video game localization, as we know it nowadays.

Bernal explains how the localization process does not only involve a translation since it also conveys other aspects: "I would define the term 'localization 'used in a commercial translation as the process of making a product linguistically and culturally, but also technically and legally, appropriate to the target country and language" (Bernal, 2014, p. 31).

Bernal mentions technical and legal adaptation in his definition of localization, because sometimes the video game, which is being translated, has to be adapted in several ways to make it appropriate for a specific culture. For instance, the companies who are in charge of rating the age of the audience to which the game is addressed in each country may find something obscene or not appropriate which was considered normal in the source language community.

According to O'Hagan, the most unique and different aspect of the video game localization is that "With games localization, the translator is expected to convey a game play experience that is as close as possible to the equivalent of the original" (O'Hagan, 2013, p. 4).The same aspect of keeping the same game experience was also mentioned by Bernal who mentioned that "What this means for the localization team is that they have to enthuse players from other cultures with the same energy the game delivered to the original culture, and give them the right information, in the right style. So that they can beat the game feeling like the hero the game advertises" (Bernal 2007).

According to Bernal, video games are considered new entertainment material in comparison to other entertainment products such as books and movies. First video game traces appeared in the United States in the 1950s with games such as Pong (Winter 1996).

1.1 History of Video Games

The first video game was based on reduced interaction and limited functions, thus this game had only little text material. Nowadays video games have developed to become very sophisticated interactive products with epic storyline that include continuous dialogues and rich graphics which in return created a need for textual material to fully "engage players" a key elements to the success of the game.

The history of video games has been well documented both in academic works (e.g. Wolf 2008) and from popular journalistic perspectives e.g. (Herz 1997; Kent 2001; Donovan 2010). Despite such good coverage and an increasing volume of research on games, there is a few sources available on how game localization practices have developed since the early days of the industry. This only points out the lack of interest in Game Studies in relation to the globalization process of video games through localization.

Hasegawa (120) divided the timeline of development phases broadly into early phase (prior to the mid-80s, Growth phase (mid-80s to the mid-90s, Development phase (mid-90s to the late-90s, maturing phase (2000 to 2005), and advancing phase (2005 to date). (Hasegawa2009, p. 120)

Minako O'Hagan et al. (46) pays special attention to technological dimensions that are closely linked to localization processes. (Minako O'Hagan et al, 2013, p. 120)

1.1.1 Early Days: Before the mid-1980s

It all started in the on 1958 with two prototypes of electronic games: *Tennis For Two* (1958) and SpaceWar! on (1962) which were both developed in the US at a public research facilities for the simple peruse of attracting visitors, which ended up giving inspiration to early coin-operated arcade games such as Computer space (1971) and Pong (1972) commercialized by Atari. emerged in the 70's, Atari was the first leading US game company to dominate 80% of the American market at its peak. Following these games were the major commercial successes of the Japanese arcade games Space Invaders (1978) and Pac-Man (1980), which are considered to have set the subsequent course of video games as a cultural phenomenon (Nielsen et al.2009. p52). In the 1970's microprocessors were introduced to replace the integrated circuits which enhanced game technology offering smoother and better looking animation (Kohler 19). Important advances were also made in audio technology in the 1980s. For example, Manic Miner (1983) was the first game to use in-game music (McCarthy et al. 110). While these early Japanese arcade games mostly posed no major language barriers, certain aspects needed to be changed for socio-linguistic reasons. A number of sources (Kohler 2005-212) refer to the change involved in the spelling of *Pac-Man* from its original Japanese transliteration presented as *Puck-Man*. The original naming of the game was derived from the Japanese onomatopoeic expression [gobble], depicting rapid mouth movements evoking the image of somebody noisily gulping food. The edit was considered necessary because of the word "Puck" and that is to prevent the title of the game from being vandalized in the US by altering the first letter.

By 1972 home entertainment was introduced by Atari with its first one-game-only console years later in 1976 the Channel F console was developed, using plug-in cartridges allowing players to play different games in one console, immediately followed by Atari's similar console

Atari VCS (Video Computer System, also known as "Atari 2600"). Atari dominated the game market in the United States throughout the 1970s by converting popular arcade games, including *Space Invaders* and *Pac-Man*, to be playable on the home console.

The dominance of Atari came to an end in the early 80's as a consequence of the mistrust of the consumer as a result of the rush production of low-quality games that flooded the markets. The period from 1983 to th1984 is generally known as "the game industry market crash" or the "Atari crash".

This created an opportunity for the creative Japanese minds, as companies such as SEGA and Nintendo to enter the scene.

1.1.2 Growth Phase: The mid-1980s to mid-1990s:

Upon the wreckage of Atari, Nintendo saw a bright opportunity to dominate the game market. In 1983, the Nintendo's 8-bit Famicom was lunched in Japan achieving an unprecedented success. Two years later the Famicom console was released in the North American market under the name of NES (Nintendo Entertainment System) and became the most popular console of the time, winning the "platform wars" the term still used today to describe fierce competition between console hardware manufacturers with their own proprietary systems. However, Ng reports that in the 1980s, the gamer population in the rest of the Asia was not large and the NES console Was not sold at an affordable price. The gamer community in Asia was growing, but the prices of Nintendo's consoles were non dropping as a result of these two factors, unauthorized NES-compatible machine was developed, it was the "red and white machine" and it was manufactured in Hong Kong in 1985, which played pirated Nintendo cartridges produced mainly in Taiwan and Thailand (213). At this stage, games have witnessed the early signs of cinematic technique for example; one of the Japanese games that appeared during this period was Tecmo's *Ninja Ryukenden* (1983). Known for the innovative

use of cinematic sequences trademarked as “Tecmo Theatre” with a well-developed storyline (Kohler 2005,219–222)

Fig ***1.1*** Translated texts in a cinematic scene in the 1989 US version Ninja Gaiden © 1988, 1989 Tecmo Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

The example of Tecmo’s *Ninja Ryukenden* (1983) shows how the emerging connection between game localization and audiovisual translation (AVT) can be traced back over 20 years with clear implications for translation. The cinematic sequences show anime-style pictures occupying the screen in a 3-by-4 aspect ratio, accompanied by the dialogue displayed in English. In this example, the only sound present was computer-generated background 8-bit music and some sound effects while the texts scrolled from left to right in the lower half of the screen, synchronized with the graphics. (See Fig.1.1). This example shows that the text does not follow today’s subtitling conventions when it comes to segmentation and line length as can be seen, the text is extended to four lines instead of two according to modern AVD subtitling norms. The example also demonstrates the unequal line length. Modern AVT subtitling guidelines dictates that lines should be proportionally as equal in length as possible, since the

viewers' eye is more accustomed to reading text in a rectangular rather than a triangular format. (Karamitroglou).

As game machine capacity increased, so too did the translatable content subject to localization. Furthermore, due to the intellectual property (IP) of character design as well as music used in some Japanese games, changes were necessary when they were sold in overseas markets (Hasegawa 127). In addition, the suitability of the content also needed consideration, particularly regarding the treatment of religious references. This was the period before the establishment of ratings bodies such as the US Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB) and therefore games were checked mainly according to game companies' own internal voluntary guidelines such as Nintendo's "NES Game Standards Policy". (O'Hagan & Mangiron 53).

In the late 1980's a new "platform war started between Sega MegaDrive (known as "Genesis" in the US) and the Super Famicom (also known as SNES) this period witnessed a number of international mega hits titles like Super Mario Bros franchise. The ultimate commercial goal of these games have set playfulness on top priority, disregarding faithfulness in translation the result was plain whimsical translations of high-profile titles. For example, the closing scene on Super Mario Pro 3 (1988) where the Princess Peach simply says in the Japanese original version "thank you! Peace has relearned to the Mushroom world. The End!" while she says in the American localized version "thank you! But our princess is in another castle!...just kidding. Ha ha ha! Bye bye" (qtd. in Kohler 68). Liberty taken in translating such examples can be taken as an early sign of what we call "Transcreation".

1.1.3 Development Phase: The mid-1990s to late 1990s:

Tracing the evolution of game consoles, it becomes clear that technological capacities and limitations shaped the games of the time in terms of graphics and sound, affecting the whole game world and **gameplay** design. This also had a follow-on impact on localization. In the late 1990s, console games began to become available in versions other than English and Japanese, with European markets finally being served with localized games in their own languages.

Clearly, the 8-bit consoles such as NES limited the storage capacity for texts and consequently limiting the amount of translated text, 16-bit consoles did not offer any rudimentary solution in this regard except some enhancements in the quality of sound tracks and graphics. Ted Woolsey who worked as localization coordinator for SNES translated the J-RPG Final Fantasy VI (1994) recalled how he had to continuously cut and reduce his English translation text to make it fit within the available capacity of the system:

> In spite of some rudimentary compression techniques, I was told it was over by about 50% of the allotted size… When they tested the next set of edited files, I was still over by 15–20%, so it was back to the drawing board, re-editing and rewriting. (kohler 2016. p 226)

The need for brevity still remains a hallmark of software localization today to cater to the limited space allocated especially for user interface (UI) elements, yet the above example suggests the text limitation in those days was more fundamentally determined by the storage capacity of the game machine, thus affecting all game texts beyond the UI. PlayStation (PS), introduced by Sony Computer Entertainment (SCE) Inc. in Japan in 1994, is a 5th generation 32-bit console which took advantage of the 640MB capacity of the CD-ROM. this offered over 100 times the maximum capacity of a cartridge around that time, with a more affordable price.

With the emergence of 32-bit environment in the 1994 more texts storage capacity was available, consequently making it possible to have more translated texts. However, the final products in this period were poorly translated due to “technological and financial limitations” as well as “the growing pains of a nascent games industry” (Corliss, online).

One of the most frequently cited examples is Nintendo’s Pro Wresting which was first released in 1986 and was the number one video game in the US for two consecutive months, and this is how the game ends!

Fig *1.2* The NES era example of mistranslation taken from NES Pro Wrestling March 1987.

This is one of the best-known video game translation errors. According to The Superhero Satellite, “This popular screw up has been loving[ly] placed in plenty of other games intentionally. “As illustrated above the period of early game localization covering the 1980’s and 1990’s were indeed known for having produced a significant quantity of poor translation ranging from “unintentional and funny to the catastrophic and silly”. (Brady).

1.1.4 Maturing Phase: Early 2000 to 2005

This phase witnessed the dominance of three console platform holders: Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft after the withdrawal of the Japanese game company SEGA from console manufacturing. The 21st century witnessed a remarkable shift in storage capacity with major console platform holders moving from CD-ROM to DVD-ROM and text fragments could be stored in ASCII instead of picture format. This advances made the localization process more efficient while allowing for much bigger storage capacity for texts. However, the length of textual strings embedded in the software were not eliminated. The realism of gameplay experience was significantly increased by implementing human voice dialog, which was unachievable without enhancing audio RAMs which was first brought in by PS2 (McCarthy et al. 111). Furthermore, one of the great advances of game technology was realized by the use of 3D graphics as well as sound and movies (cut-scenes) within games.as far as translation is concerned, cut-scenes gave rise to the explicit use of subtitles and dubbing techniques similar but not identical to those used in AVT. Gamers are expecting to go through the same game experience despite their different backgrounds, a burden left to the localizer to deal with. Hasegawa (129) gives an example of the finer attention that became necessary to achieve more accurate lip-synching in the re-voicing of dialogue in the localization process in response to the improved graphic technologies affording details of the facial expressions of game characters. Another localization trend noted during this period is the entry onto the market of small localization companies enabled by the increased scope for making profits out of localization, in turn increasing competition while reducing the pricing of localization (ActiveGaming Media n.d).

1.1.5 Advancing Phase: 2005 to date:

With the recent arrival of 7th generation consoles such as Xbox 360 and PS3, consoles came to serve as home multimedia devices offering internet connectivity and communication along with entertainment and yet again offering even more storage capacity compared to the previous generations. Localization, linguistic covering, cultural, technological and social dimensions of the gameplay experience had a direct impact on the dynamic advances in game technologies The enhanced hardware capacity of 7th generation consoles also led to an increased volume of game software content needing to be localized, including text, audio, and graphics.

Simultaneous shipping known as **sim-ship** a new release trend where localized games are shipped simultaneously with the original this approach impose a strict deadline on the localizer and not mentioning that the localization process has to be done while the game is still under development, which leaves the localizer working with a product stripped out of its context. (Dietz 125–126)

See Fig.1.3.

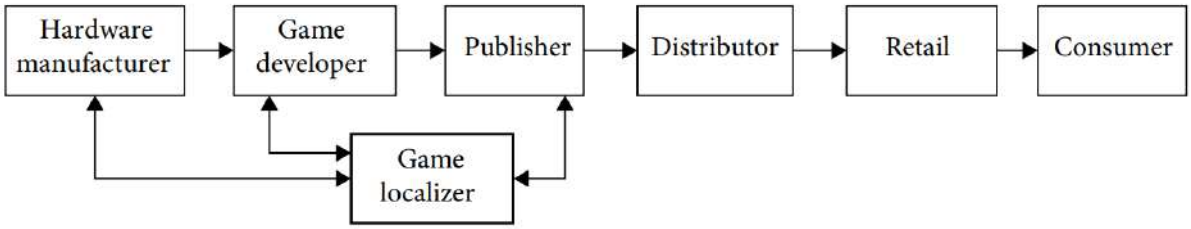


Fig 1.3 The Game Industry Product Chain with Localization (adapted from EgenfeldtNielsen et al. 16).

During production, a game goes through several versions called builds, which may be tested. The first basic playable version is called the “Alpha build”, followed by the Beta build before the gold master is released. Once reaching the Beta stage, new builds may be created on

nearly a daily basis, following new additions of functions, assets, and other elements to the game (Newman 53) Given that the testing takes time, only those builds that involve significant code changes tend to be tested (ibid.). Unlike the typical testing of productivity software, processes of "real-world testing" (Egenfeldt-Nielsen et al. 19) are often used to test the beta version of the game (thus known as "beta testing"). Usually this is done by invited gamers, called "beta testers", forming part of consumer feedback on the product under development. This is characteristic of the game industry, which has historically developed somewhat more explicit connections to the users of their products compared with other software sectors (O'Hagan el al 62).

The 8th and current generation of video games began with the release of Nintendo's Wii U in 2012, followed by the PlayStation 4 and Xbox One in 2013. Despite featuring a touch screen remote control that allowed off-TV gaming and being able to play Wii games, the Wii U was a commercial failure—the opposite of its competition—and was discontinued in 2017.

In 2016, Sony released a more powerful version of its console, called the PlayStation 4 Pro, the first console capable of 4K video output. In early 2017, Nintendo released its Wii U successor, the Nintendo Switch, the only system to allow both television-based and handheld gaming. Microsoft will release its 4K-ready console, the Xbox One X, in late 2017. (Onion et al.).

With their new improved consoles, both Sony and Microsoft currently have their sights set on virtual reality gaming, a technology that has the potential to change the way players experience video games. The current eighth generation of consoles are entering the end of their life cycles. With the 9th generation from Sony and Microsoft being slated for release sometime in 2020. (Guy)

Chapter 2 : Video Games Localization

2.1 Software Localization

Software includes all those applications that can be installed in computers, with the main purpose of making certain tasks not only possible but easy to perform by any user with only a small amount of training, International users of computer software have come to expect their software to "talk" to them in their own language. This is not only a matter of convenience or of national pride, but also a matter of productivity. Users who fully understand a product will be more skilled in handling it and avoid mistakes. Therefore, they will prefer applications in their language and adapted to their cultural environment. Technically speaking, software is programming code assembled in an executable file, which tells the hardware processor what to do. This program code is dependent on the type of the processor being used, and its instructions must work the same way before and after the localization process.

Software products usually come accompanied by instructions commonly called "Readme files", tutorials and help files with information on how to get the best out of the program and on what is the easiest way of doing the tasks the application has been designed for. The translation of these software products must therefore favor clarity and brevity over other characteristics, especially when dealing with the use interface (UI) and the pop-up captions boxes with contextual help that activate when passing the mouse pointer over an active area of the screen (Esselink 223). However, because of the pragmatic and productive expectations of these products, software localization is not only a linguistic process since it involves many other tasks that have nothing to do with language nor communication, at least not directly. Of course, this could be interpreted as true for almost any kind of translation if we focus on the product as opposed to the text, and follow the whole process from beginning to end, when the finished item for consumption reaches end users. (Bernal-Merino 12)

Video games belonging to “interactive publishing” sets them apart when it comes to localization due to the extra elements that should be taken into account in the process of localization. elements like multimedia elements (images, text, sound) are localized with different standards, on the contrary to software localization video game localization does not focuses on functionality but it focuses on originality of game experience.

2.2 Similarities and Differences between Software and Video Games Localization

Video games localization shares similar aspects with software localization both video games localization and software localization involve combining language translation and software engineering, where translated text strings need to be appropriately placed within the software. This requires the string length to be within the allocated space, which in turn constrains the translation freedom. Both follow a similar localization cycle, which starts ideally with the internationalization process and undergoes a set of QA (quality assessment) procedures before the release of the final version. Another similarity lies in the use of the sim-ship (simultaneous shipment) model, where the original product, normally in English language, is released together with the localized versions. This is an accepted model in the localization industry today, but has a significant implication for translation, where the translator has to work with unstable source content, which could keep changing throughout the duration of the project. Most games released in Europe seem to follow this model as opposed to the model where the localized versions lag behind the release of the original. The latter is common among Japanese game developers/publishers. Localizers working under the sim-ship model are likely to face the added stress of having to carry out the task without being able to see or play the finished game and have to translate strings whose contexts are not always available.

A distinct difference between video games and software localization lies in the fact that while functionality has been the key priority in the software localization, in a game this functionality must be achieved with a high degree of creativity and originality. Although it is crucial that games should not freeze or crash and that they should be user-friendly, the fact that they are quirky and fun to play is equally or even more important. This is because the main purpose of a game is to entertain the user, whereas the utilitarian dimension is the goal of business software. Game localization industry expert Chandler suggests that standardization of the localization practices as achieved in software localization is not always transferable to the games localization where each genre, and even title, begs different approaches to retain the distinct flavor unique to the original game. (qtd. in O'Hagan 3)

2.3 Video Games Localization and Screen Translation

Game localization also shares many characteristics with audiovisual translation, since most localized games are currently dubbed or subtitled, or both. Japanese games are usually dubbed into English and subtitled into other European languages whereas games that are originally produced in English are either dubbed or subtitled into other languages. Although most game players who come from 'dubbing countries', as established in cinema and television conventions, prefer this mode for games as well, subtitling seems to be a more attractive option for developers. The reasons for this are mainly the time and high cost implications of dubbing a game, as well as the status of English as lingua franca in the international gaming community. As far as the dubbing process is concerned, it is very similar to dubbing a movie or an animated film. The script is translated taking into account the amount of time available for each spoken sentence, and lip synchronization is also considered whenever possible. The script is subsequently recorded by professional voice actors in a studio.

Unlike dubbing, subtitling for games is quite different from the screen translation conventions used for subtitling films, although it shares some features in common with

subtitling in the cinema industry. For example, most dubbed games include intralingual subtitles. Interlingual subtitles is mainly used for the games that have not been dubbed. As is possible with movies, the users also have the possibility of controlling the subtitles, i.e. they can pause and restart while playing the game. However, game subtitles usually appear at a faster speed than in cinema, to keep pace with generally rapid game actions. However, in nowadays game the player has access to game instructions and character dialogue from the game menu at any point of the gameplay. Another difference is that in subtitling for games the semantic unit is not given as much importance as in cinemas; one will often find a character's dialogue segmented into two or even more lines of subtitles, which do not necessarily follow semantic units. On the other hand, subtitles length in games is measured by pixels instead of number of characters in order to maximize the space available. Accordingly, localizers are provided with custom-made programs that allow them to check the length of the subtitle on screen. Which gives them an approximate idea of how many characters correspond to the maximum number of pixels allowed per line.

Another significant feature of the subtitles in games is the use of a different color, usually light blue or yellow, to highlight important information, such as place names, which is relevant for the gameplay and helps the player advance in the game.

2.4 Aspects and Features of video games localization

According to O'Hagan and Mangiron, game localization in the commercial context refers to all the varied processes involved in transforming a game software developed in one country into a proper game software for sale in the target region. These transformations are due to linguistic, cultural and technical implication depending on the target player base.

Although software and video game localization share common futures. However, video game localization has its own specific challenges that arise from the fact that video games are not purely functional products but entertainment products. In software localization, the

localization process is limited to translating UI elements. Whereas video game localization go beyond UI translation to more textual and non-textual elements such as graphics, storyline, video, and audio, in this regard Zhou states:

> Game localization is a complex endeavor. It typically involves many different media, including text, graphics, video, and audio. Aside from the challenges of localizing the user interface, the storyline and content may need to be modified or even re-created to account for cultural and legal issues. (349)

O'Hagan similarly asserts the multifaceted nature of video game localization:

> For example, video game localization has added new dimensions to utility software localization. Modern video games are interactive multimedia systems, with their rich content comprising written text, graphics, cut-scenes (movies), sounds, etc. realized in a highly complex technological system. (95)

A video game is made up of different assets that need to be localized namely in-game text, art assets, audio and cinematic assets, and printed material. All these assets are subjected to localization and then integrated within the game. The integration process should be smooth and cause no crashes or bugs for the finished product.

2.4.1 Game Assets Requiring Localization

This part is dedicated to elaborate on game assets requiring localization, Mangiron classifies the game assets that need to be localized into five categories:

In-game text

In-game text or on screen text (OST) refers to all the text present in the user interface. Such as menus, help messages, tutorials and system messages, narrative and descriptive

passages, and all dialogues that are not voiced-over and only appear in written form, such as conversations held with non-playable characters (NPCs), who are driven by the game system and cannot be controlled by the player. In terms of strict space limitation for texts in the UI, video game localization is no different from productivity software localization, statistics for players, help messages, system messages, and list of items. All these elements make the game screens extremely busy compared to screens for typical productivity software; nevertheless, this makes space restrictions even more critical while localizing the UI in order not to ruin the player's game experience. The UI is the gateway to the game world. For this reason, it is recommended to use clear language, and to avoid abbreviations when possible. As Dietz's states:

> A game interface should not destroy the player's willing suspension of disbelief concerning the 'reality' of the game. Unlike the interface of a normal application, which is integrated into the program, it exists as a quasi-transparent layer between the world of the game and the world of the player. Therefore, it must be both unobtrusive and fully functional. (126)

Localization of in-game texts must adhere to the terminology set by platform holders; such as Sony for PlayStation, Microsoft for Xbox. According to O'Hagan:

The terminology used for these different platforms varies considerably, but localizers must be familiar with it and adapt their translations to the terminology used in the platform or platforms for which a game is going to be released. For example, Sony uses the term "analogue stick" in English to define the lever in the controller that allows the player to make selections, scroll screens and control the main characters in a game. However, Microsoft uses "thumb-stick". Adherence to the hardware manufacturer's guidelines is essential, and a game could fail the submission process to the platform holder if the wrong terminology is selected. For instance

using the term “thumb-stick” in a game that is going to be published for Sony PlayStation would mean that the game would be rejected and would have to go back to the developer to make the necessary changes and resubmitted and the developer would have to pay the submission fees again. The following table contains some examples of the terminology approved by Microsoft and Sony for their Xbox and PlayStation for their consoles respectively.

Table 2.1 Comparison of Sony VS. Microsoft terminology.

Sony’s terminology for PlayStation	Microsoft terminology for Xbox
analog stick	thumbstick
memory card (8MB) (for PS2)	memory unit
MEMORY CARD slot	memory unit slot
directional buttons	directional pad
L1 Button*	LB Button (Top Left Button)
* placed in the top left part of the back of the controller	
L2 Button*	LT Button (Left Trigger)
* used as trigger	

Art assets

Also known as, “textual graphics” and “graphic text” which refers to all those graphics and images, such as maps, signs, and notices that include text in the original version and must be adapted for the localized versions. Usually these assets need to be resigned in order to include the text in the TL for the localized version. In order to keep the textual world of the game coherent, it is advisable to localize all textual graphics, except when they are originally

in a different language and are used simply to create a particular atmosphere such as graphics containing Arabic in a game developed in English about wars in the Middle East.

Fig 2.1 a scene taken from Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2 illustrating an art asset in Arabic.

According to O'Hagan, often developers do not take art assets into account when they are planning the localization process. In order to save time and resources they may not translate them. Therefore, some text in the original language is left in the localized version, presenting a heterogeneous textual world that may cause some confusion to the players. In addition, in some cases these textual graphics may include a clue or some information relevant to gameplay, which means that gamers who do not have enough knowledge of the original language are likely to miss out on that information. As this could negatively affect their performance and overall gameplay experience, ideally it is advisable to translate textual graphics and design them so that the textual element may be readily extracted (124).

Audio and cinematic assets

This includes all those elements with audio and voiceover that need to be translated. Such as songs, script, and cut-scenes (cinematics) the later is the only non-intriactive element of a game,which gamers cannot control since gamers are obliged to watch these scens at least

once but in more modern games they include the option of skiping these cinimatics depending on their function and significance to the storyline. Cut-scenes turn gamers into spectators for brief periods and have thus proved controversial within the gamer community, as many players resent the lack of interactivity (Newman 25). Players having the option of skiping cinimatics and they often did may have been one of the reason why the translation of cinematic scenes in games has long been neglected, as gamers generally do not pay much attention to them or to the quality of their translation. However, more recently the trend of "cinematic games" is incorporating many techniques used in the film industry into the game production (Newman xii). This will likely have implications for game localization.

Printed materials

According to O'Hagan, Printed materials include all those elements in print that accompany a game, such as the instruction manual and the packaging. The translation of the printed materials is not always carried out by the same translator(s) who have worked on localizing the game, and it can be outsourced to another translator or vendor. This may also apply to press releases, marketing and legal documents, promotion materials, strategy guides, and online help resources (125). However, instruction manuals are no longer common in the game industry since April 2010, when the French publisher Ubisoft announced that they would eliminate the printed version of manuals in their games, and they would only provide in-game digital manuals. This change will have an impact on the categorization of manuals as they will not fall any longer under the category of printed materials, and they would be categorized as in-game texts. This new module has been adopted by many game companies due to the fact that it is financially economic and environmentally safe,in addition, it may also be justified by the fact that few gamers actually read the manual unless they become stuck in a game.

2.4.2 Game Localization Process

The main stages of localization cycle of a typical video game in the best-case scenario go as follows. The Fig.2.2 outlines the different stages in the game localization process.

2.4.2.1 Pre-localization

Pre-localization is the preparatory work prior to the actual localization. Its aim is to ensure that the project will be carried out smoothly and on time with minimum problems. During this stage, the following tasks are performed:

- Creation of localization kit: localization kit contains relevant information about the project, as well as the files and the assets to be translated. The localization kit is prepared by the developer or the publisher.
- Appointment of a localization coordinator and translators: At this point, the localization manager appoints the localization coordinator who will supervise the localization project whether it was through a localization agency or a localization specialist (freelance translator).
- Preparatory work at this phase the translator spends some time familiarizing themselves with the game, playing it reading information about the plot and the walkthrough, listing key terms and creating TMs (translation memories)

2.4.2.2 Translation

This phase is the core of the localization process. The challenging aspect of translating video games is that video games require the same talent for storytelling found in literature, the cinematic realization of filmmakers and the artisanship involved in the manufacture of toys. Moreover, according to Miguel the quantity and variety of the translatable assets generated by each video game may come as a surprise to people who are accustomed to literary and

audiovisual translation and other fields of translation. Whether in combination with the cinema or the book industries, or on their own, many video games will require the translation of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands of words, including, for example, manuals, game dialogue scripts and technical and legal documentation. The workload for translation agencies increases exponentially depending on the number of languages into which a game will be translated. (Bernal-Merino 152). In addition to the challenges above the translation in a sim-ship model is usually carried out in parallel for all target languages while the original game is still under development. The translator therefore works with a source text (ST) which keeps changing. Whereas in a post-gold model the original game is published providing the translator with a finished product and a stable text. In the case of Japanese games localized according to this model, they are generally translated first into US English, for the North American market, and then into other languages such as Arabic using US English as a source language.

2.4.2.3 Editing

After the translation phase is finalized the editing process follows, which consists of the review and the proofreading of the translated assets. in case the translation was carried out according to the in-house model the translators review each other's work. After that, the developer hires editors to carry out a whole review to make sure that there are no translation errors and to also make sure that the translation is coherent and consistent. In the out-sourcing model, the editing phase is performed by the vendor itself (the localization agency). Reviewers may make the appropriate changes to unify the style and the terminology used in the game in order to guarantee the quality of the localized product or they may simply indicate the suggested changes and corrections to the translators, who will then implement them in their files.

2.4.2.4 Recording

Nowadays game companies are seeking realism with the use of voiceover, a task that can only be accomplished by the collaboration of translators and voice-over actors, in this phase translators should ‘not expect the voiceover strings to be presented to them on a linear way. In other words, all the lines for each character may be grouped together rather than presented in their interactions. Thus, translators and voice-over actors are likely to miss the context of the dialogue exchanges and these are not the perfect conditions to produce an accurate translation.

Once the translation has been edited, it is ready for audio localization. The script and all the voiceover messages are recorded by professional voice actors in a recording studio. At this stage, an adjuster may modify the final version of the translation for lip-synching or timing purposes. Once the script has been recorded, developers are reluctant to make changes to it, as they are costly. However, if a major error is found after the recording has been finalized (for example, an inconsistency between what is being said and what is seen on the screen), the affected line or lines may be re-recorded. Major projects may schedule “a pick up session” in order to make corrections.

What differentiates voice over for games from traditional dubbing applied in cinema lies in the use of the so-called “stitches”, mainly used in sports games, in order to save space in the disc (qtd. in O'Hagan and Mangiron 136). Stitches are short audio files containing utterances made by game characters, segmented and recorded separately, so that they can be used at different stages of the game as appropriate, with variables inserted in run-time. In this type of intervention, there are both fixed and variable elements that the game engine selects when certain conditions are met as shown in table 2.2. In order to get the best of this technique the localizer must chose the most idiomatic translation that fit in all contexts to avoid odd and unnatural sounding voiceovers.

Table 2.2 The use of stitches in spots games.

Variable element 1	Fixed element	Variable element 2	Fixed element
Player A	just scored the	first goal	of the match!
Player B		second goal	
Player C		third goal	

2.4.2.5 Post-localization

Post localization is the phase that comes after translation, editing and reviewing and recording the target files.it consists of mainly of two stages:

1. Integration: team of engineers integrate the translated files, audio and art assets, and image files in the game code to produce the first functional version of the localized product, known as the "**first playable alpha**".

2. Debugging and quality assurance (QA): Once the first playable alpha has been integrated, a team of testers plays the beta version exploring the ins and outs of the game searching for errors and bugs listing them in a bug database. As bugs are found, new versions of the game are integrated and released, as long as bugs keep emerging, new versions of the game will be released in order to fix the bugs until a stable release candidate is reached. the amount of time devoted to testing usually depend on financial reasons it can take few weeks up to few months in the case of AAA titles. in the QA stage the translators and reviewers can view those isolated strings they translated in context for the first time. This allows them to detect errors caused by lack of contextual information at the earlier translation stage and improve the quality of the target version. For this reason, the developers place major importance to the QA process of the localized product.

The types of errors detected in the localized video games most commonly found are related to the following areas:

Functionality: these are the most critical type of bugs that are related to the game itself and the UI. For example, does the game freeze or crash after preforming a certain action; do the different commands work. This type of testing is known as the “functionality testing”.

Compliance: the localized versions are checked for adherence to the technical requirement checklist this checklist include the localization standards for each platform manufacturer, legal, ethical, and ratings related criteria. This type of testing is known as the “compliance testing”.

Linguistic errors: these are mainly bugs related to texts such as grammar mistakes, typos, truncations, overlaps, the use of incorrect platform terminology, the use of unidiomatic language.

Once the game has been tested and the final version is almost ready, publishers usually submit a copy of the localized version of the game along with the appropriate documentation.to the appropriate software rating board. To obtain rating (Chandler and Deming 35).

The following table, based on Chandler provides an example of a typical game localization scenario of a multi-platform English title to FIGS for the Xbox 360, the PS3 and PC.

Table 2.3 A game Localization Scenario.

Task	Volume			Timeframe
Translation	30,000 words in-game text	10,000 in-game words		20 days (single translator)
		20,000 words of dialogue (all dialogue to be subtitled)	12 major characters (100+ lines each) 20 minor characters 400 dubbed lines in cut-scenes	
Casting	32 characters (voice talents)			7 days (including time for approvals)
Voiceover (VO) Recording	2,000 lines, involving 32 characters			14 days (both recording and processing)
Asset Integration	In-game text, audio files (no art assets to be integrated)			1 day
Linguistic Testing	3 rounds testing/fixes			21 days
Ratings Review	Need 100% content			3–4 weeks
Production	1 language / platform			63 days
	1 language / 3 platforms			107 days
	4 languages /3 platforms			428 person days

2.4.3 Genres of Video Games

An important factor that should be taken into consideration while localizing a video game is the genre of the video game ought to be localized, as the genre of a video game might affect the strategies adopted in the localization process. O'Hagan and Mangiron stressed this point:

> As text types are significant in translation, game genres help identify similar characteristics of texts and also often text volume (text-heavy games as opposed to action-heavy), thus indicating the particular translator competence required. Games belonging to a specialized domain such as military, aviation,

> and various sports genres seek to achieve a great degree of authenticity and realism through accurate visual and verbal representation for the given domain, including the precise use of terminology. (70)

In the context of studying video game localization, it is important understand the essential part of video games. For a gamer few words, labeling a game can tell them whether they would like to play the game and what kind of experience they can expect. For a translator, knowing the game's genre directs them to know what kind of work they would be doing. For example, a Role Playing Game also called an (RPG) is much likely to include larger amounts of texts to be translated than a First Person Shouter (also called FPS). However, the difference is not only on the text amount, but it exceeds that to the strategies and techniques used in the translation process. For example translating texts from a simulation game such as Flight Simulator 2020, Train Sim World, and Euro Truck Simulator requires a high level of technicality in order to present a realistic gameplay environment that resembles the-real world events. In which the games are based.

According to Nielsen et al., video games can be classified into five genres:

Action video games: where criterion for success is motor skill and hand-eye coordination. Most fighting games, racing games and shooters, as well as arcade games such as Pac-Man fall under this category. These games test players' reaction speeds more than their decision making. (56-60).

Adventure games: Adventure games require deep thinking and great patience and player must use skills of logic and deduction in order to achieve the game's goal. Games with puzzle solving elements and some role-playing games fall under this category.

Strategy games: Strategy games are games, where the player assumes the role of a general instead of being on the battlefield (Ibid, 57). Players "have to balance large numbers of interdependent variables, paying careful attention to signals of other players' choices and

strategies" (Ibid.). Popular games in this genre include WarCraft, StarCraft, Age of Empires, and Civilization etc.

Process-oriented games: Process-oriented games provide players with a system freely to play with, instead of restricting them to certain goals. Massively Multiplayer Online Games, where players assume the role of a character in a vast, persistent universe; Process-oriented games provide players with a system freely to play with, instead of restricting them to certain goals. Massively Multiplayer Online Games, where players assume the role of a character in a vast, persistent universe.

Management games: where players manage a business like a zoo or a theme park; simulation games trying to convey real world experiences like flying a plane fall under this category.

However, (Bernal-Merino 3) argues that as far as Translation is concerned, there is only two types of video games. One that includes games that are set in an already established universe, meaning that the video game is based on a movie, novel, or Animation movie…etc. In this type of video games, the Translators are obliged to research the universe to familiarize themselves with its terminology and style. A clear example of this type is the harry potter game which is based on a series of fantasy novels written by the British author (J.K. Rowling).the second type of video games according to Bernal-Merino is the games that introduce new universes. These games give translators creative freedom, so they can focus on delivering an enjoyable experience for international players.

2.4.4 Text Type in Video Games

Unlike traditional translation, video game localization involves a combination of specialized translation and literary translation, where "terminology meets literature" (Bernal-Marino 4).

According to Mangiron and O'Hagan "a wide range of text types, from literary to technical with the use of literary narrative devices, legal texts and contemporary dialogue scripts full of street-speak, can be present within one game" (154).

Indeed video games include technical, marketing and legal texts, these texts fall under the umbrella of socialized translation. Not to mention the literary core of the game which is the story.

All these text type present within the game pose different challenges for the translator, technical translation requires knowledge of software localization, IT terminology and localization industry standards, marketing content requires a dynamic and attractive style in order to advertise the game, legal texts require competence in translating licensing, terms and conditions, and privacy policies. Translating literary texts such as dialogs and plots and narratives requires cultural and linguistic awareness, and creativity and literary sense. Furthermore, game localization is a purpose or Skopos oriented activity (O'Hagan and Mangiron 312). Video games are there to entertain and immerse players in a virtual world; naturally, the localized version shall serve the same purpose. Moreover, game localization is a target-oriented at its very core (Esselink 65). Therefore, the target player base are expecting the same game experience as experienced by the original game's player base. Fulfilling this purpose is the way developers make money out of localization in the video game industry. In order to clarify the matter we can apply Catharina Reiss's textual function (1970/2000) to Mangiron O'Hagan's classification of text-types that can be found in video games. The informative function is content-focused, the persuasive function is appeal-focused and the expressive function is form-focused. Thus, technical and legal texts are governed by the informative function, presenting states and facts. Marketing texts display a focus on the appeal and their function is persuasive. Literary texts in games, like all literature, display an expressive

function. The translator should maintain the functions of the translated texts according to their particular genre in the original game.

The following table illustrates the relation between Catharina Reiss's textual functions and Mangiron and O'Hagan's texts classification in video games.

Table 2.4 Textual genres and their functions.

Textual genre	Informative	Persuasive	Expressive
Legal	✔		
Technical	✔		
Marketing		✔	
Literary			✔

The textual genre mentioned above need be assigned with the actual text-type presented in video games.

Usually there are two kinds of texts presented within a video game: in-game text and collateral materials.

In-game texts is further divided into game interface, game mechanics and game lore. The interface include elements such as menus, dialog boxes with options and settings, and strings (error messages, status messages, questions, and tooltips). Game Mechanics; contain item names and descriptions, hero classes and skills, player instructions, hints, tutorials, trophies and achievements. Game Lore consists of plot (descriptive texts, epic texts), dialogs (between player and NPC, between multiple NPCs), quests and missions (dialogs, summaries, and journals), world history, races, books and poems.

Collateral materials are texts that come along with the video game but are not included in the game such as legal texts informational texts and marketing texts.

The following table demonstrates the two main text types and their subdivisions.

Table 2.5 Text types in video games.

In-game Content	Collateral Materials
Game Interface: ➢ menu ➢ dialog boxes with options and settings ➢ strings (error messages, status messages, questions, tooltips) Game Mechanics ➢ item names and descriptions ➢ hero classes and skills ➢ player instructions, hints, tutorials ➢ trophies and achievements (names and descriptions) Game Lore ➢ plot (descriptive texts, epic texts) ➢ dialogs (between player and NPC, between NPCs) ➢ quests and missions (dialogs, summaries, journals) ➢ world history, races ➢ books, poems, songs	Legal Texts: ➢ EULA ➢ Terms and Conditions ➢ Privacy Policy Informational Texts: ➢ user instructions ➢ Readme ➢ updates, patches ➢ developer announcements ➢ system requirements Marketing Texts: ➢ adverts ➢ descriptions ➢ web content

2.4.5 Levels of Video Games Localization

Marketing strategies define the different localization levels, more promising markets, have more chances of full localization, however, some platform holders might fully localize their games into the languages of emerging markets in order to increase their hardware sales and to insure their presence in these emerging markets. A clear example of this point is the case of SONY's Spiderman 4, which was fully localized for the Arabic speaking market in North Africa and Middle East (MENA).

Chandler categorized localization into four main levels:

No localization: some video games are not localized and are sold in their original language in other countries. This offers the possibility of selling extra copies without investing in the localization process.

Box and docs localization: this refers to the localization of the packaging and the manual of the game. The game code and language remain in the original version, but the manual and packaging and other supporting documents are localized into the target language. This type of localization is typically done for a game that is not expected to sell more than few thousand copies in other countries. Big advantage of box and docs localization is that the all language versions can be shipped simultaneously with the original version.

Partial localization: partial localization means that only in-game text is translated without having a voice over. This method is a cost effective, since there is no need to hire voice actors or redesign graphics on account of lip-syncing for dubbing. The voice files containing dialogs are usually subtitled in the target language.

Full localization: a full localization is the deepest level of localization and the most financially expensive and resource demanding one, as this type of localization involves the localization of all game assets including in-game texts, voiceover, packaging, game code. This provides the players with a game fully adapted to their language needs and facilitates gameplay and emergence in the game.

Nowadays developers and publishers have the tendency to carry on a full or partial localization. This depends on the importance of the target market and the resources assigned to the project.

2.5 Challenges in Video Games Localization

In video game localization, the translator might face many challenges; these challenges can be classified into three broad categories: technical, linguistic, and cultural challenges.

Technical challenges

The Arabic letters are read from the right to the left while its numerals are read from the left to the right, more over its script is written in cursive (letters are connected together like English handwriting). Languages with this criterion are technically called bidirectional languages. Such languages require layout customization not only for texts but also to all the UI.

Linguistic challenges

All video games incorporate variables for the translatable string that is to say that the game software uses sting tables, which replace the variables contained in sentences, or phrases with pre-defined string of texts see table 2.2 for more information.

For the translator this can impose a challenge because the translated sentence has to make sense grammatically regardless of what text is added later when the variable is replaced.

A variable is code that is replaced during the game by a different value or term, depending on the choices made by the player and the plot development, for example, "You won %n star%s". Here, the variable “%n” will be replaced by the actual number of stars, and the variable “%s” will be replaced by “s” of plural or “null” depending on the number of stars.

Of course, this is the case in the source text, which is in English, but if to be translated into Arabic this set of variable will not work

Therefore, in the Arabic text, the variation will be multiplied as shown in the following table:

Table 2.6 Variable in in-game text (English version).

You won %n star%s	You won 1 star
	You won 2 stars

Table 2.7 Variable in in-game text (Arabic version).

//	لقد ربحت نجمة واحدة
//	لقد ربحت نجمتان
لقد ربحت n% نجو م	لقد ربحت 3 نجوم (3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10)
لقد ربحت n% نجمة	لقد ربحت 20 نجمة (20,30,40,50,60,70,80,90,100)

According to Hatab and Goui, gender and number can impose a challenge especially while translating from English into Arabic (66-78). For example in an online game the player will receive this message ”you lost this game” if the same game was localized into Arabic this one sentence will have three different translations depending on the grammatical number whether it was singularity, duality, or plural.

Table *2.8* Grammatical Number issues while Translating from English to Arabic.

You lost this game	لقد خسرت المباراة
//	لقد خسرتما المباراة
//	لقد خسرتم المباراة

This example illustrates grammatical number issues while translating from English to Arabic, here comes the role of the developer to insert three different variables rather than one as in the source language to insure an accurate translation in the final product.

Text fragmentation also represent a challenge while translating, as the translator deals with isolated and decontextualized fragments. So the translator will be left obliged to assume the gender and number of the addresser and the addressee. Translators accustomed to traditional translation will most likely dislike this lack of context.

Cultural challenges

Video games contain some aspects of multimedia content that extends beyond pure texts, such as voice over and video, these require a careful analysis and adaptation in order to meet with the target audience expectations. Failing to do so can result in a negative outcome. A famous example of this failure is a title developed by Microsoft, which caused a great offence to the government of Saudi Arabia and to all Muslim players around the world. The game soundtrack contained chanting in the background supposedly to add an Arab Muslim eastern flavor to the game, later on it turned out that the chanting consisted of passages from the Holly Quran, which is strictly forbidden in Islam. Microsoft later issued a new version of the game without the chanting, while keeping the previous versions in circulation because US staff

thought the slip would not be spotted, but the Saudi government banned the game anyway and demanded official apology. Microsoft ultimately withdrew the game.

It is important therefore to remember that localization is more than just translation. It is a complex, multidisciplinary process, which requires profound understanding of culture and language and how they affect people's perception and interactions with technology at its very core the localization is about recognizing and accommodating differences between different cultures to ensure that the final product is accepted by the target player base.

Intentionally left Blanc

Chapter 3 : Analysis of PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS

3.1 The Survey

We opted for an online survey rather than the traditional one to reach a wide range of Arab players and gain a clear understanding from the Arab player's perspective, and gain a broad understanding of the reason behind the choice of Arab players to play the game in its original language rather than playing the localized version. Hopefully, it will serve as a conclusion for the study where the research questions posed in the introduction are answered.

3.1.1 Description of the Survey

The online survey was designed and distributed randomly via email, social media, and other communication platforms. In order to collect data regarding the players' views about localized games and their language preferences, as well as to understand the reasons behind their choices of language in their Favourite game.

The survey consists of twelve questions, a combination of close-ended, open-ended, and multi-choice questions.

Online Questionnaire

1. Where do you live? (Open-ended question)
2. How old are you? (Multi-choice question)
3. What is your native Language? (Open-ended question)
4. Languages you speak other than your native language? (Multi-choice question)
5. For how long have you been playing video games? (Close-ended question)

6. How many hours do you play video games every day on average? (Open-ended question)

7. What is your Favourite game platform? (Multi-choice question)

8. Do you use Steam? (Close-ended question)

9. How many hours you have in your most played game? (Close-ended question)

10. What is your Favourite video game? (Open-ended question)

11. In which language you prefer playing your favourite video game. (Close-ended question)

12. Why would you prefer playing video games in English instead of Arabic? (Open-ended question).

Intentionally Left Blanc

3.1.2 Analysis

The Survey was designed using Jot Form and shared on Social media (Facebook Gaming Groups) and a gaming communication platform (Discord).

The total number of participants is 76

The participants are from Algeria, Morocco, Saudi Arabic, Syria, Jordan, and some European countries.

All the participants are males.

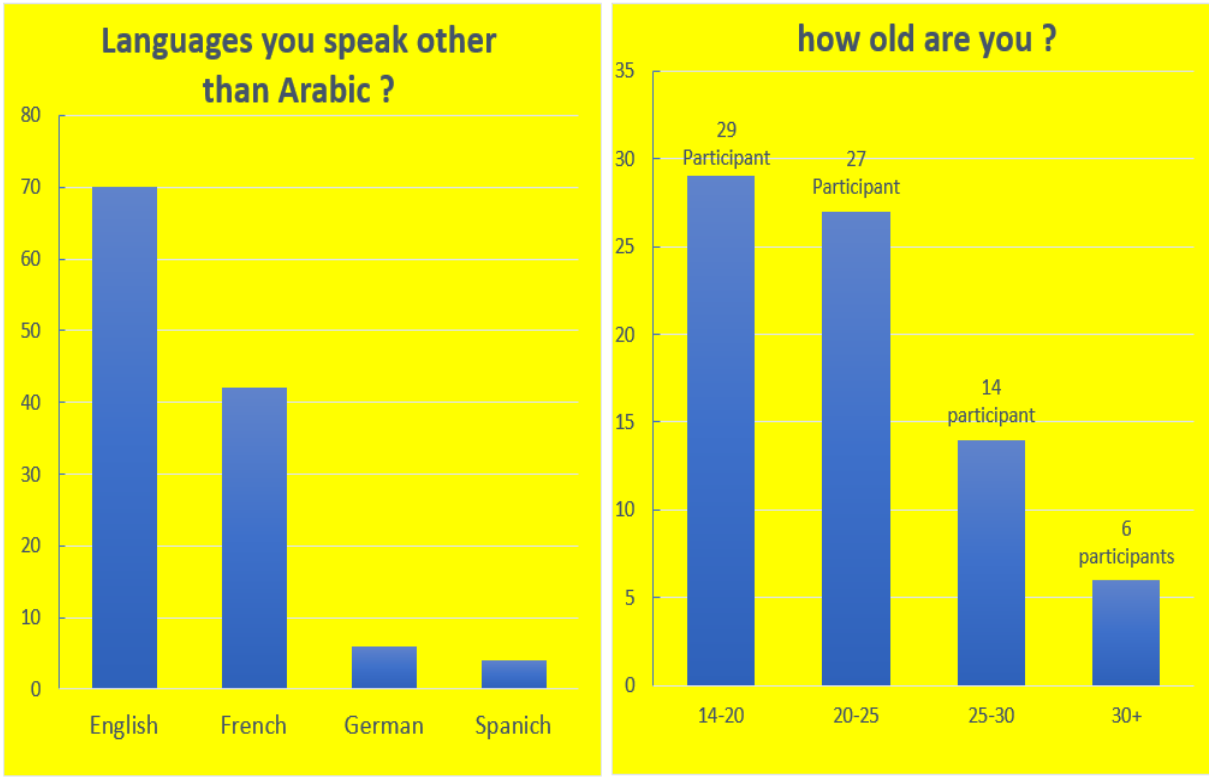


Fig 3.1 Participants' age and language competence.

Although the vast majority of participants are from Algeria, in which the second language is French, but we saw that English became the dominant language for Algerian gamers.

This might be due to the fact that English is becoming the lingua franca in the world faced by the downfall of the French language especially in IT related fields.

As expected, the age of the majority of gamers ranges between 14 and 25 years making 56 out of 76 participants.

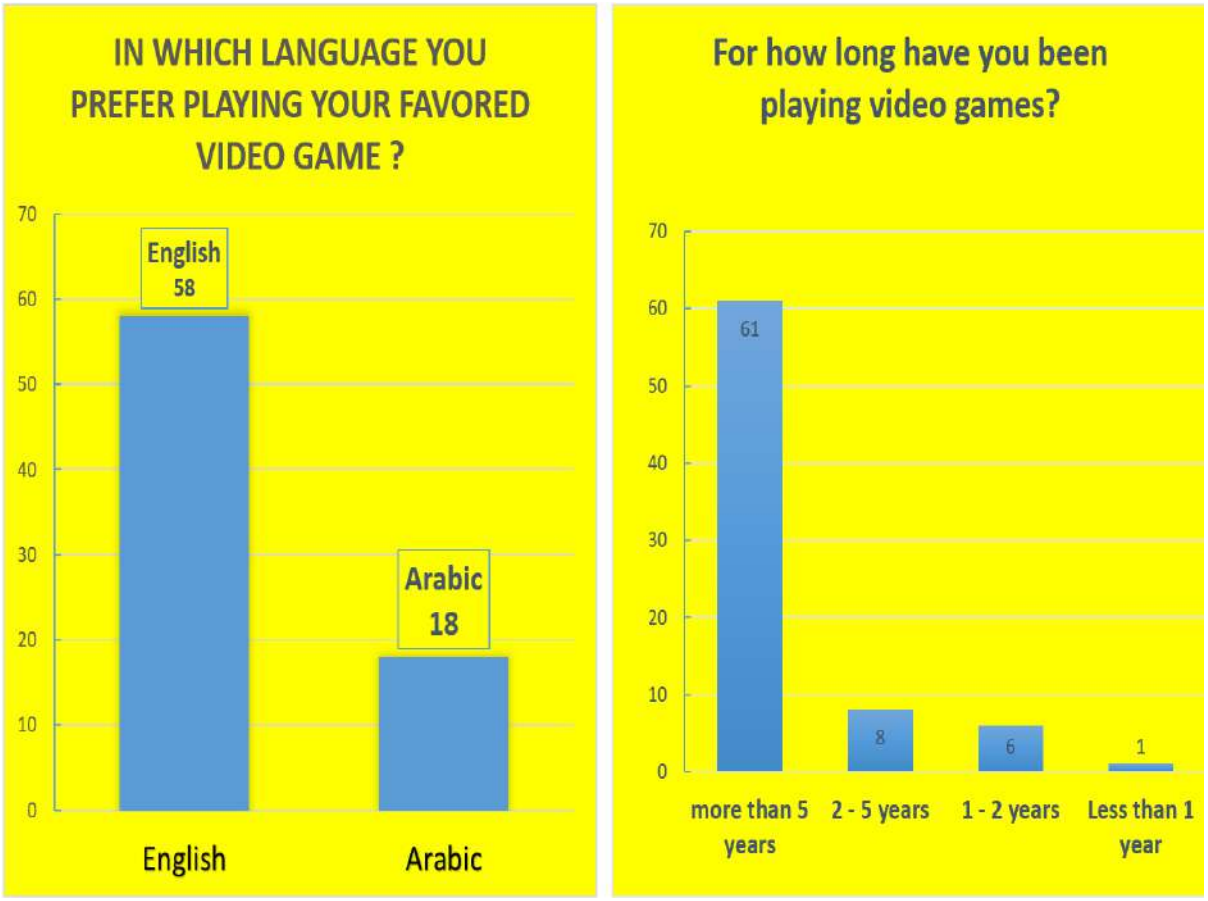


Fig 3.2 The language choice along with experience in gaming.

Sixty-one (61) out of Seventy-six (76) participants have a considerable gaming experience of more than 5 years.

Fig.3.1 gave us an indicator on how the players would answer the question of "In which language you prefer playing your favourite game?"

As expected, the majority of players have chosen English as their default language in their favourite game.

The result as follows:

English: 58, Arabic: 18

Fig 3.3 Samples classification and some examples from the participants' answer.

Bad Translation includes bad voice acting, wrong terminology, mistranslation, and visual issues.

Other reasons include participants choosing other languages than English and no answer is provided.

English provides better game experience; it facilitates communication especially in online games, English being precise, and no visual issue.

Arabic not available means that the game is not yet localized, which indicates a lack of Localization services in the Arab world

3.1.3 Findings and Discussion.

It is clear that most of Arab players would prefer playing the game in its original version rather than playing it in Arabic for the following reasons:

- Poor localization quality. (Bad voice acting, use of a specific regional or local dialect instead of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).
- English provides a better game experience.
- No localization available for the game that they are playing.
- For education purposes as they want to learn English as a forging language through playing video games.
- Players play their multiplayer games in English to avoid misunderstandings between them regarding game items.
- Lack of Arabic game content in the internet (walkthroughs, gameplay, guides, and how-tos).

3.2 The Case Study: PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS

3.2.1 About PUBG

PLAYERUNKNOWN'S BATTLEGROUNDS or PUBG as most people call, is the phenomenon that took the world of interactive entertainment by storm in 2017. The Japanese movie “battle royal” inspired Brendan Greene to create the game. Battlegrounds is a player versus player shooter game in which up to one hundred players fight in a battle royal, a type of large-scale last man standing deathmatch where players fight to remain the last alive. Players can choose to enter the match solo, duo, or with a small team of up to four people. The last person or team alive wins the match.

PUBG was developed by a South Korean game company called Bluehole. The game was localized into 17 languages including Arabic, French, Polish, Russian, Korean and Thai. It is worth mentioning that the game was partially localized that is to say that they only localized in-game texts, The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section, website, update, and patches.

The game is available on multiple platforms and the following are the release dates and their corresponding platforms:

Pre-Alpha (NDA) | June - September 2016.

Alpha (No NDA) | October - December 2016.

Closed Beta | February - March 2017.

Steam Early Access | March 23, 2017.

Xbox One Game Preview Release | December 12, 2017.

Full Xbox One Release | September 4th, 2018.

PUBG Project Thai | September 2018.

PS4 Release | December 7th, 2018.

PUBG Project Thai renamed to 'PUBG LITE.' | January 24th, 2019.

Google Stadia version of PUBG was released on April 28th, 2020.

3.2.2 Analysis

According to Ahmad Khuddro Translation errors are classified into five major categories: accuracy, linguistics, terminology, style, and typo in addition to the mentioned categories we shall include another error category called “Technical error” which is mainly associated with software localization In which we accordingly classified the samples (113-135).

Accuracy:

Sample 01

The above example highlights the inaccuracy that may be encountered in in-game text if the translator missed out the intended function of UI element.

We suggest the correct translation would be as follows:

ST	TT
Controls	التحكم
Key Bindings	أزرار التحكم

Sample 02

For the above example, highlight unnatural Arabic structure due to literal translation

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Gameplay related	ذات صلة باللعب

Sample 03

In this example, the translator has confused between being unarmed and the state of having the weapon drown out, which resulted in inaccurate translation.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Unarm	إخفاء السلاح
Reload	تذخير

Sample 04

The example present a case in which the translator confused between two words that fall under the same semantic field which are vehicle and engine. Therefore, the result was inaccurate translation.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Vehicles	المركبات
Gameplay	تفاصيل اللعب

Linguistic errors:

Sample 01

In this example, the translator made a mistake by imitating the English structure, which lead to the omission of the proposition "على" in the target text.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Come! Click! Get! All the Cool Items!	تعال! انقر! واحصل على العديد من العناصر الرائعة!

Sample 02

The UI element above shows grammatical error due to the omission if the definite article (الـــ) in the word "تعبئة". Not to mention the wrong choice of equivalence regarding the word “Reload”.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Auto Reload	إعادة التعبئة تلقائيا
Auto Reload	إعادة التذخير تلقائيا

Sample 03

In the above example, we noticed that the translator has made a grammatical error by adding the definite article (الـــ) to the word "زر" which lead to incorrect translation. Not to mention incorrect translation of the word "purchase history", which was translated to “ سجل الشراء”

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Click on the [Settings] button	أنقر فوق زر [الإعدادات]
Purchase history	سجل المقتنيات / المشتريات

- Game Rules
  - How to win the match
    - The team to make 30 kills first wins.
    - If the duration of the match exceeds 10 minutes before either team reaches 30 kills, the team with the high kill counts wins
    - It will result in a draw if both teams have the same kill counts at the end of the match
- Starting a Match
  - When the match starts, there is a 30 second waiting time.
  - There is an invisible wall blocking the entrance during the waiting time; players cannot go outside during this time.
  - After the waiting time ends, the invisible wall disappears, and the match begins.

قواعد اللعبة

كيفية الفوز بالمباراة

- . الفريق الذي يقوم بقتل 30 لاعب يفوز أولاً.
- إذا تجاوزت فترة المباراة 10 دقيقة قبل أن يصل أي فريق إلى 30 قتلة، يفوز الفريق الذي يملك أكبر عدد من القتلات.
- إذا كان الفريقان يملكان نفس عدد القتلات مع إنتهاء الوقت تصبح النتيجة هي التعادل.

بدء المباراة

- عندما تبدأ المباراة ، هناك وقت الانتظار 30 ثانية.
- هناك جدار غير مرئي يمنع اللاعبين الخروج خلال هذا الوقت.
- بعد انتهاء وقت الانتظار ، يختفي الجدار غير المرئي ، وتبدأ المباراة.

كيفية الحصول على الأسلحة:

Sample 04

In this example, the translator made a mistake, which is related to Arabic Number-gender Agreement.

Not to mention the omission of the preposition "من" in the TT, which resulted in incorrect translation.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
10 minutes	10 دقائق
There is an invisible wall blocking the entrance during the waiting time; Players cannot go outside during this time	هنالك جدار غير مرئي يمنع اللاعبين من الدخول طيلة وقت الانتظار.

Terminology errors:

Sample 01

In this example the translator made two mistakes, one concerning inconsistency when she/he translated the word “Action” one time and borrowed in the second time.

Not to mention the wrong choice of equivalence in which she/he translated the word “Action” to "أفعال"in this context, which is wrong translation.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Common Actions	حركات كثيرة الاستعمال
Combat Actions	حركات قتالية

Sample 02

In this example, the translator made a mistake by translating the word “Hold” into “علق” which have very different meaning in Arabic.

In addition, she/he made another mistake by translating the word “Peek” into “الانحناء”.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Hold	اضغط باستمرار
Peek	اختلاس النظر

Sample 03

In this example, the translator choose to use the borrowed word “’Molotov” while there is an existing equivalence in TL.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Molotov Cocktail	الزجاجات الحارقة

Sample 04

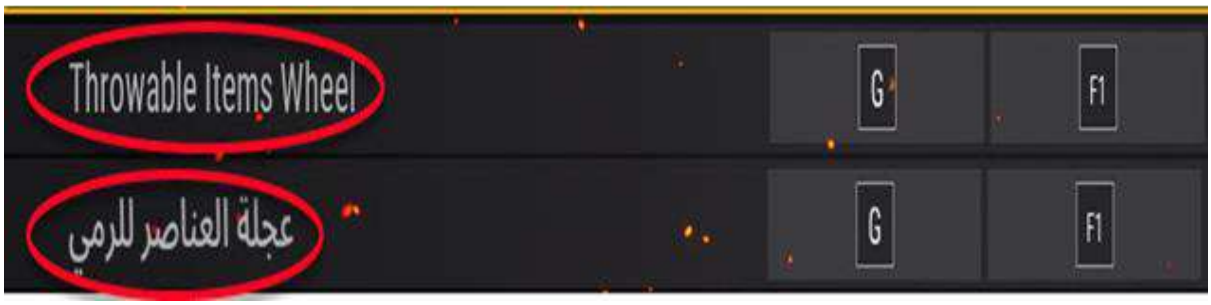
In this example, the translator chose to use the borrowed word “’Lobby” while there is an existing equivalence in TL.

There is also an inconsistency in terminology by translating the same term with different translation within the same text.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Lobby Screen	شاشة الردهة

Stylistic errors:



Sample 01

A stylistic error: it means that you can understand the intention of the text, though it sounds strange or perhaps does not fit with the target language norms

The above example highlights the unnaturalness in TT, where the ST "Throwable Items Wheel" was translated into:

"عجلة العناصر للرمي".

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Throwable Items Wheel	دائرة العناصر القابلة للرمي

Sample 02

In the above example, the first sentence illustrates stylistic error, due to excessive use of literal translation.

Where the ST “Add canted Sight as a new attachment” was translated into:

”تم إضافة مرفق جديدة ومنظار جديدة وهو المنظار المائل“.

The second sentence presents a lot of redundancy in which the ST “Canted sight is a new scope for weapons with a secondary scope slot” was translated into:

”تم إضافة إمكانية لإضافة مرفق جديد لبعض الأسلحة لإضافة المنظار المائل“.

Not to mention the linguistic error.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Add canted Sight as a new attachment	تم إضافة المنظار المائل كمرفق جديد
Canted sight is a new scope for weapons with a secondary scope slot	المنظار المائل مخصص للأسلحة المصممة لاحتواء منظارين.

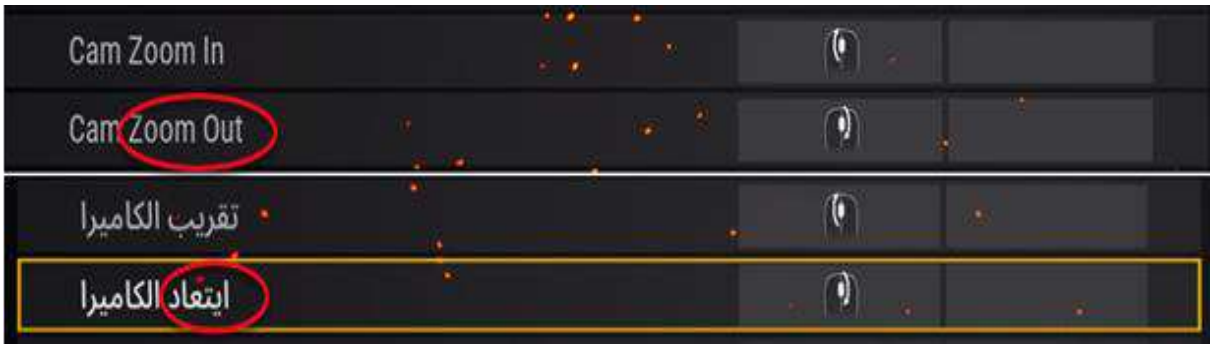
Sample 03

The example above shows many stylistic errors, in which the TT is understood, but there is an issue of readability.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Fixed an issue where it was possible to enter a wall under certain bridge in Sanhok	تم إصلاح الأخطاء المتعلقة بإمكانية مرور اللاعب عبر الجدران تحت أحد الجسور في خريطة سانهوك.
Fixed an issue where matchmaking would cancel after presenting a ؤ message	تم إصلاح الأخطاء المتعلقة بإلغاء البحث عن المباراة عند ظهور إشعارات الرسائل.
Fixed an issue where punch sounds could be heard louder than intended across different floors in a building	تم إصلاح الأخطاء المتعلقة بالصوت المرتفع جدا للكمات والتي كان يمكن سماعها عبر عدة طوابق.

Typographical Error (Typos):

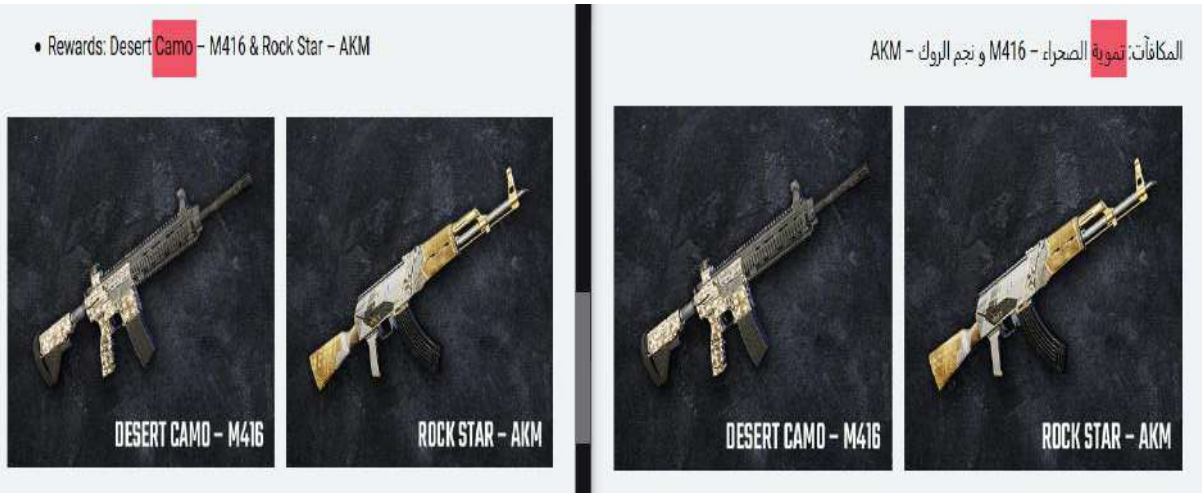


Sample 01

Sample 02

Sample 03

Sample 04



Sample 05

Sample 06

In the above six samples there are verity of typos error which can be related to Hamza writing, gender issues, and problems of translating definite and indefinite articles.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Cam Zoom Out	**إبعاد الكاميرا**
Toggle X-Ray	**تشغيل الأشعة السينية**
I encounter problems starting the game. How do I fix this?	**لا يمكنني تشغيل اللعبة. كيف يمكنني إصلاح ذلك؟**
Desert Camo	**تمويه الصحراء**
From this moment, you can no longer summon the airdrops with the Flare Gun.	**بعد هاته المرحلة لا يمكنك استدعاء الإمدادات الجوية عن طريق مسدس الإشارة الضوئية.**

Vehicle Driver's Seat	**مقعد سائق المركبة**
Move to Vehicle Seat 2	**الانتقال إلى المقعد 2 في السيارة**
Move to Vehicle Seat 3	**الانتقال إلى المقعد 3 في السيارة**
Move to Vehicle Seat 4	**الانتقال إلى المقعد 4 في السيارة**

Technical errors:

Sample 01

Usually in-game text overlapping is UI related issue, which can be found only in the languages that use different writing direction such as Arabic, Urdu, and Hebrew.

Therefore, the translator here is not to blame on this slip, but the developer is for not taking the proper internationalization procedures.

We suggest the following translation:

ST	TT
Key Guide	الدليل الرئيسي

Sample 02

Here we have a clear example of the outcome of not respecting the writing system of Arabic while localizing a game, the kill feed should be written from right to left respectively to the Arabic writing system to avoid such anomalies.

It is worth mentioning that it is the developer's responsibility to fix such issue during the phase of Localization Quality Assurance.

We suggest the following fix:

ST	TT
[Player1] killed [player2] by headshot with [gun name]	[Player1] قَتــل [player2] بطلقة في الرأس بواسطة [gun name]
Reinher killed KaR98_AKM by head shot with Mini14	Reinher قَتــل KaR98_AKM بطلقة في الرأس بواسطة Mini14

Note: we opted for this structure in the TT to make easy for the player to read the message quickly considering the first thing you see in the ST is the killer and the killed person and that is the most significant thing for players.

Sample 03

Sample 04

The above two examples illustrate another technical issue which can be found either in UI or in-game text.

This issue is related to writing direction variation between English and Arabic.

The ST is written as follows “Sort by Type Time” which is written from left to right, whereas The TT is written as follows "الوقت نوع فرز حسب" which is written from left to right imitating the ST structure.

The result was unreadable translation in the TT.

In addition to mistranslation and inconsistency in terminology which are shown in the example 04.

We suggest the following fix:

ST	TT
Sort by Type Time	فرز حسب النوع الوقت
8x Scope	منظار 8x
Holographic Sight	منظار ثلاثي الأبعاد
Red Dot Sight	منظار النقطة الحمراء

3.2.3 Findings and Discussion

The localized version of a video game must offer the player the same interface, sensation and game experience as the original version. Games that have been poorly translated generate great disappointment in the target audience, making the new version a failure in the target market. With that in mind, our findings are as follows:

In terms of accuracy, the game includes numerous mistranslations, out of context translations, wrong choice of equivalence.

At the linguistic level, we have spotted some grammar mistakes mainly related to gender and number agreement, position of the Arabic Hamza, and some issues related to translating articles and prepositions.

Having regard to terminology, we have noticed a certain inconsistency in terminology throughout the game in which the same term have been translated differently within the game. This can be an indicator of a lack of communication in the translation team.

In terms of stylistics, we have come across many unidiomatic expressions and a stilted language (cases of translationese). Menacingly that the sentence could be grammatically correct but phrased in a way that the native speaker would never use due the excessive use of literal translation.

In terms of typographical errors (typos), they were found mainly in the patch notes and updates on the official website, this might be due to the lack of proofreading and editing.

In terms of technical issues, through our analysis we found that these issues are found in in-game texts where variables are used extensively, along with visual issues that are related to the different writing direction that English and Arabic have.

3.3 Conclusion

This study dealt with the Arabic localization of video games with PUBG as the case study. It is divided into three chapters: Chapter One dealt with the history of video games from its early stages to nowadays practice and how did the advancement of video game technology affect the industry of video game localization throughout the years. Chapter Two dealt with video game localization and software localization in general highlighting the differences between them in addition to the aspects and futures of video game localization as well as the video game localization as a process. Chapter Three was the practical part of the study; it was devoted to the analysis of the case study.

We hypothesized that not hiring a localization expert cannot assure the best quality of the localized game before release and might lead to unexpected clashes with the local player base. We also hypothesized that there are time and space constraints while dealing with subtitles, lastly, we hypothesized that there are challenges that might arise while localizing non-textual materials these challenges are related to cultural norms.

Through the analysis of the survey and the case study (PUBG), we came to the following conclusions:

Indeed not hiring a localization expert will result in a bad localization quality a major factor that lead to the decision of the most players that responded to the survey of not playing the localized version of video games.

Time and space are challenges that face any translator while translating textual files in video games. Especially in the RPG games or whenever the Sim-Ship model is adopted by the publisher. However, in our case study space did not represent a major challenge since the game did not contain much dialog, yet time constraints were a major challenge due to update cycles with tight deadlines.

Through our analysis, it turned out that, cultural norms had a major effect on the localization since the translators opted for literal translation for idiomatic expressions, which resulted in a rejection among the playerbase.

جامعة قاصدي مرباح ورقلة
كلية الآداب واللغات
قسم اللغة الإنجليزية

مذكرة

ميدان: الآداب واللغات الأجنبية

تخصص: الترجمة وعلم الترجمة إنجليزية–عربية

من إعداد:

نجار محمد الأمين

بلمعبدي محمد فاتح

بعنوان:

توطـــين ألعاب الفيديو إلى اللغـــة العربيـــة

لعبـــة الفيديـو (ببجى) نمـــوذجـــا

مذكرة مقدمة لاستكمال متطلبات نيل شهادة الماستر في الترجمة

أشرف على تقييم المذكرة

أعضاء اللجنة المكونة من:

رئيس اللجنة: الدكتورة سعدون فريدة	جامعة قاصدي مرباح ورقلة
المشرف: الأستاذة ليلى يحياوي	جامعة قاصدي مرباح ورقلة
المناقش: الأستاذ حمزة زغار	جامعة قاصدي مرباح ورقلة

السنة الجامعية: 2020/2019

ملخص الدراسة

توطين ألعاب الفيديو إلى اللغة العربية: لعبة الفيديو (ببجي) أنموذجا

مقدمـــــــــــــة

عرفت ألعاب الفيديو تطورا كبيرا منذ إصدار أول لعبة سنة 1958 والمسماة "Tennis for Two"، حيث كانت تحظى بشعبية كبيرة كإحدى وسائل الترفيه الإلكترونية، عرفت تكنولوجيا ألعاب الفيديو تحولا جذريا انطلاقا من استعمال الأقراص المرنة التقليدية ذات مساحة التخزين الضئيلة إلى تقنية الواقع الافتراضي التي تسافر باللاعبين إلى عالم افتراضي.

إن الإقبال العالمي الشديد على ألعاب الفيديو قد فرض على مطوري ألعاب الفيديو انتهاج أسلوب التدويل من أجل توطين ألعاب الفيديو، ففي هذا السياق قامت كل من هيذر تشاندلر وستيفاني أومالي ديمينج (2012) بتحديد الفرق بين التدويل (Internationalization) والتوطين (Localization). فكلاهما مصطلحان ضروريان من أجل تذليل الصعاب في فهم مراحل عملية التوطين لألعاب الفيديو بغية تسويقها في بلدان أجنبية.

حيث أن مصطلح التدويل يقصد به تصميم وتطوير منتج أو تطبيق أو محتوى بطريقة ذكية تسمح بتكييفه إلى مختلف الثقافات والبلدان واللغات دون اللجوء إلى إعادة التصميم من جديد.

بينما المقصود بمصطلح التوطين هو تكييف منتج أو تطبيق أو محتوى مع لغة وثقافة ومتطلبات أخرى لجمهور معين. تجدر الإشارة هنا إلى أن عملية التوطين لا تقتصر على ترجمة واجهة المستخدم والوثائق المرفقة بل تتعدى ذلك إلى عدة مسائل تقنية أخرى معقدة، فعلى سبيل المثال قد يضطر الفريق العامل على توطين لعبة فيديو ما إلى إعادة تصميم الشخصيات لتتوافق مع مقتضيات الثقافة الهدف، وأحيانا قد يتعدى ذلك إلى حذف المحتوى أو تغيير تصميم في النسخة الهدف وذلك تفاديا لأية مشاكل تتعلق بالثقافة الهدف من محتوى غير لائق أو مشاكل أخرى غير مرغوب فيها في النسخة الأصلية.

نجاعة منهج التدويل ضمان لسلاسة عملية التوطين، مما يسمح لفريق الترجمة أن يصب كامل اهتمامه على الترجمة ويدع المشاكل التقنية المتعلقة بمحتويات أو محرك اللعبة لفريق التطوير، فمثلا تلك الصعوبات المتعلقة بواجهة المستخدم سواء كانت من ناحية الوضوح أو قلة المساحة المخصصة للترجمة.

إن العلاقة بين توطين ألعاب الفيديو ودراسات الترجمة لم تُعطى القدرَ الكافي من الاهتمام وخاصة في الوسط الأكاديمي، حيث نجد أن توطين ألعاب الفيديو يتطلب أساليب مختلفة مقارنة بغيره من أنواع الترجمة ولنأخذ الترجمة الأدبية على سبيل المثال.

لألعاب الفيديو جانب مهم ألا وهو متعة اللعب حيث أن اللاعب في تحكم دائم ومباشر في تطور وتقدم مجريات اللعبة. ولذلك كان من الضرورة بمكان أثناء الترجمة الحرص على ضمان تجربة لعب حقيقية مشابهة لما كانت عليه في النسخة الأصلية، وهذا مكمن الاختلاف بين ترجمة ألعاب الفيديو وترجمة الروايات والأفلام والمسلسلات.

في اقتباس من كتاب كارمن مانقيرون وميناكو أوهاغان:

> لا يجب أن تكون هنالك أية عناصر غريبة أو دخيلة تفسد تجربة اللعبة التفاعلية، وهذا هو السبب الرئيسي في منح مترجمي ألعاب الفيديو حرية شبه مطلقة في تعديل وحذف وحتى إضافة أية عناصر يرونها ضرورية لتقريب اللعبة من اللاعبين ونقل الشعور الأصلي للعبة وبذلك يتم تجاهل المفهوم التقليدي للترجمة الأمينة أو الولاء للنص الأصل. ومن هنا أصبح من الضرورة انتهاج أسلوب الترجمة الإبداعية بدل الترجمة التقليدية في توطين ألعاب الفيديو.(ص 20)

الترجمة الإبداعية (Transcreation): هي أسلوب ترجمة يميز ترجمة ألعاب الفيديو عن سائر أنواع الترجمة الأخرى.

لقد أصبحت صناعة ألعاب الفيديو أحد أهم الصناعات الترفيهية على مستوى العالم في القرن الواحد والعشرين حيث عرفت تزايدا ملحوظا في شعبيتها ولهذا أصبح لزاما على المطورين إنتاج ألعاب فيديو ذات جودة عالية وقصة محبوكة تضمن متعة اللعب من أجل فرض مكانتهم في ظل هاته السوق المحتدمة. لعبة الفيديو (Metal Gear) من انتتاج شركة كونامي على سبيل المثال بلغت ميزانية إنتاجها ما يقدر ب 80 مليون دولار أمريكي. فهي تصنف من ضمن الألعاب ذات الميزانية الضخمة (Triple A games). ولهذا السبب فإن اللعة يجب أن تحقق نسبة مبيعات كبيرة في السوق الدولية من أجل تعويض الأموال المستثمرة وتحقيق أرباح كبيرة، ولا يمكن بلوغ هذا الهدف إلا من خلال توطين اللعبة إلى لغات مختلفة مما يسمح بوصولها إلى أكبر شريحة ممكنة من محبي ألعاب الفيديو.

أهداف الدراسة

إن الهدف من هاته الدراسة هو إلقاء الضوء على توطين ألعاب الفيديو إلى اللغة العربية ومناقشة الأسباب التي جعلت هذا النوع من الترجمة صعبا ومعقدا. وذلك من خلال تقديم أمثلة من النموذج المختار في الدراسة وتحليلها.

كما تهدف هاته الدراسة إلى تحديد الفروقات بين توطين الألعاب ومختلف أنواع الترجمة الأخرى، مع التطرق إلى مختلف التحديات والصعوبات المرافقة لعملية التوطين وكيفية تذليلها.

الإشكالية

إن مصطلح توطين ألعاب الفيديو لا يقتصر على ترجمة النصوص المتضمنة في اللعة فقط / بل يتعداه ليكون جزءا من عملية التطوير فعلى سبيل المثال هنالك بعض العناصر المتضمنة في النسخة الأصلية من اللعبة إذا ما تم الإبقاء عليها قد تحدث شرخا أو نفورا لدى شريحة محبي ألعاب الفيديو، ومن بعض الأمثلة على ذلك المحتوى الفاضح أو المحتوى المسيء دينيًا.

انطلاقا مما سبق حاولنا صياغة إشكالية البحث على النحو الآتي:

السؤال الرئيسي:

على الرغم من الميزانية الضخمة المخصصة لتوطين الألعاب إلى اللغة العربية، إلا أن بعض محبي ألعاب الفيديو يفضلون لعب النسخة الإنجليزية، فما هو السبب؟

الأسئلة الفرعية

1. كيفية الحفاظ على متعة اللعب في النسخة الهدف خلال عملية التوطين دون التسبب في نفور في عموم السوق المستهدفة؟
2. ما هي الصعوبات التي تصاحب عملية ترجمة الملفات النصية في اللعبة؟
3. ما هي الصعوبات التي تصاحب عملية توطين العناصر غير نصية في اللعبة؟

الفرضيات

1. عدم اللجوء إلى خبير التوطين لن يضمن جودة اللعبة المترجمة وبالتالي ستلقى اللعبة نفورا لدى محبي الألعاب.
2. هنالك إشكاليات متعلقة بالمساحة المخصصة للترجمة المرئية كما هنالك ضيق في الآجال الممنوحة لفريق الترجمة.
3. المشاكل المصاحبة لتوطين العناصر غير نصية متعلقة أساسا بمعايير ثقافية.

المنهجية

بغية الكشف عن السبب الرئيسي وراء تفضيل اللاعبين العرب لعب النسخة الأصلية بدل النسخة المعربة.

قررنا اتباع نهج يتضمن الأساليب الكمية والنوعية لتسهيل عملية الاستقصاء والتحليل والوصول إلى أجوبة للأسئلة المطروحة في الإشكالية. بمعنى آخر تم انتهاج الأسلوب الكمي في عملية الاستقصاء، بينما تم انتهاج الأسلوب الكمي في تفسير النتائج المتحصل عليها من خلال الإستبيان.

كما تم استعمال الأسلوب النوعي في تحليل الأمثلة المستخرجة من نموذج الدراسة وتفسريها فيما بعد والوصول إلى نتائج نهائية.

جمع البيانات

البيانات التي بنيت عليها الدراسة تم تجميعها من المصادر التالية:

الإستبيان: تم تصميم الإستبيان وتوزيعه عشوائيا عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي والتطبيقات التواصلية المخصصة للألعاب بغية الوصول إلى فهم وجهة نظر اللاعبين.

اللعبة: تم تشغيل اللعبة بنسختيها الأصلية (الإنجليزية) والمترجمة (العربية) وأخذ صور وأمثلة بغية مقارنتها ليتم فيما بعد التوصل إلى الأساليب الترجمية المستعملة في توطين ألعاب الفيديو وكذا القاء الضوء على بعض الصعوبات المرافقة لها.

الموقع الرسمي للعبة: تم الولوج للموقع الرسمي للعبة لاستخراج بعض الأمثلة ومقارنتها فيما بعد.

اختيار العينات

جميع المشاركين في الإستبيان من العالم العربي وقد تم اختيارهم عشوائيا.

تم اختيار لعبة (ببجي) نموذجا للدراسة لسببين رئيسيين وهما:

أولا: لما تعرفه اللعبة من رواج وشعبية في العالم أجمع وخاصة في العالم العربي، دون ذكر أن اللعبة قد مهدت لظهور نمط جديد من ألعاب الفيديو ألا وهو (Battle Royale)، كما أن اللعبة قد عرفت نجاحا منقطع النظير، بالإضافة إلى أن اللعبة تصنف من ضمن الألعاب الجماعية التي تلعب عبر الإنترنت والتي تدمج بين العديد من الأصناف كالتشويق والحركة والاستراتيجية.

ثانيا: كون اللعبة قد تم توطينها إلى اللغة العربية ونظرا لأن عدد الألعاب المعربة تعد على الأصابع، مما يجعلها عينة ممتازة للدراسة.

دون ذكر الكم الكبير من النصوص المتاحة والتي يمكن الولوج إليها بسهولة من خلال اللعبة أو موقعها الرسمي على الإنترنت.

اعتمدنا في اختيار العينات على مدى أهميتها وعلاقتها المباشرة بموضوع الدراسة أملا في الوصول إلى أجوبة شافية للأسئلة المطروحة في الإشكالية.

لا يمكن بأي حال من الأحوال أن نقول عن ترجمة ما أنها ترجمة ممتازة إلا إذا استوفت ثلاثة شروط أساسية ألا وهي سلامة اللغة والأسلوب ومراعاة الاعتبارات الثقافية. من هذا المنطلق قمنا باختيار الأمثلة التي تخدم هذا الغرض.

تحليل البيانات

تم تحليل كل من البيانات التي تم جمعها عبر الإستبيان ومن خلال اللعبة.

انتهجنا خلال التحليل أسلوبا يتضمن كل من الأسلوب الكمي والنوعي:

التحليل الوصفي في قراءة وتحليل البينات المستخرجة من الإستبيان، بينما تم استعمال منهج التحليل المقارن في تحليل الأمثلة المستخرجة من اللعبة الأصلية واللعبة المعربة ليتم تفسير النتائج فيما بعد.

هيكل البحث

يتكون البحث من ثلاثة فصول مقسمة كما يلي:

الفصل الأول: يتطرق الفصل الأول إلى خلفيات الدراسة وما تم إنجازه من بحوث في ميدان توطين ألعاب الفيديو، كما يشير إلى الهوة الواقعة في العالم العربي في مثل هذه البحوث والدراسات.

كما تم التطرق إلى ميدان توطين ألعاب الفيديو من منظور أبرز الباحثين والكتاب في هذا الميدان من أمثال شاندلر وأوها غان ومانجيرون وغيرهم الكثير.

الفصل الثاني: يتطرق الفصل الثاني إلى جل التفاصيل المتعلقة بتوطين البرامج بشكل عام وتوطين ألعاب الفيديو بشكل خاص كون الأخير منبثقا من الأول، وذلك منذ أول ظهور لألعاب الفيديو في بداية ثمانينيات القرن الماضي إلى غاية يومنا هذا.

الفصل الثالث: الفصل الثالث مخصص لتحليل المعلومات المستخرجة من الإستبيان وتفسير النتائج ومن ثم تحليل الأمثلة المستخرجة من اللعبة بإصدارها الأصلي والمعرب وموقعها الرسمي بلغتيه العربية والإنجليزية ومقارنة جميع الأمثلة ومناقشتها جنبا إلى جنب من ناحية اللغة والأسلوب والدقة في الترجمة والمصطلحات المستعملة وكذا المشاكل التقنية والأخطاء الكتابية. ليتم بعد ذلك التوصل إلى نتائج وتوصيات مهمة بخصوص جودة اللعبة المعربة مقارنة بنظيرتها الأصلية.

ملخص الفصل الأول

الإطار النظري:

إن دراسات توطين ألعاب الفيديو نوع جديد منبثق عن دراسات الترجمة، انبثق من الترجمة السمعية البصرية أو ما يسمى بترجمة الشاشة. توطين ألعاب الفيديو ليس مجرد ترجمة لعناصر نصية من اللغة الأصل إلى اللغة الهدف وإنما يتعداه إلى عناصر أخرى والتي يجب تكييفها للوصول إلى منتوج مقبول لدى المتلقي الهدف.

إن تاريخ ألعاب الفيديو قصير مقارنة بالمسرحيات والروايات وغيرها من وسائل الترفيه.

على بالرغم من انطلاقتها المتعثرة إلا انه تم إيجاد طرق لكيفية تكييف الألعاب وإيصالها إلى عدة أسواق أجنبية مختلفة.

والفضل في ذلك يعود إلى صناعة توطين ألعاب الفيديو التي سمحت بمواكبة الطلب الشديد وغير المسبوق لمثل هذا النوع من وسائل الترفيه التفاعلية. تم إجراء العديد من البحوث والدراسات من منظور دراسة الألعاب (ludology) وذلك من خلال الباحث الأكاديمي جونزالو فراسكا المتخصص في تصميم الألعاب ليتم فيما بعد إحراء دراسات تركز على عملية التوطين من منظور عملي وذلك من خلال منتجة ألعاب الفيديو الشهيرة شاندلر.

كما قام الكثير من الباحثين إلى التطرق إلى توطين ألعاب الفيديو من منظور دراسات الترجمة كأمثال

الدكتور برنال والدكتورتان ميناكو أوهاغان وكارمن مانقيرون المتخصصتان في دراسات الترجمة.

قام هؤلاء الباحثون بإنشاء مجال جديد للبحث ضمن دراسات الترجمة مما ساهم في تأسيس وصياغة توطين ألعاب الفيديو كما نعرفه في وقتنا الحالي.

في اقتباس لبرنال:

"لا تقتصر عملية توطين ألعاب الفيديو على الترجمة فقط بل تتعداها إلى تفاصيل أخرى " حيث يعتبر أن التوطين هو عملية تكييف منتج بحيث يكون ملائما في اللغة الهدف من ناحية اللغة والثقافة كما يجب أن يراعي الاعتبارات القانونية والتقنية "(ص 31) .

وفي اقتباس لأوها غان:

"الخاصية المميزة لتوطين ألعاب الفيديو هو أن المترجم مطالب بنقل نفس متعة اللعب المتواجدة في النسخة الأصل إلى النسخة الهدف"(ص 04) .

ملخص الفصل الأول: تاريخ ألعاب الفيديو

يمكن تلخيص تاريخ ألعاب الفيديو إلى خمسة مراحل وذلك استنادا إلى تقسيم هاسيغاوا:

1) **البدايات الأولى: ما قبل 1980.**

بدأت هاته المرحلة مع إطلاق أول نسخة تجريبية للألعاب الإلكترونية مثل لعبة Tennis for Two سنة 1958.

والتي تم تطويرها في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية في منشأة بحث عمومية من أجل استقطاب الزوار لتصبح فيما بعد تلك اللعبة الإلهام لصناعة ألعاب الأر كايد مثل Pong سنة 1972.

عرفت هاته المرحلة استبدال الدوائر المدمجة ب نسخ مطورة من المعالجات لتحسين جودة الألعاب من ناحية الصورة والأصوات.

كما تجدر الإشارة إلى أن هاته المرحلة عرفت هيمنة شركة Atari الأمريكية للأسواق من خلال إنتاجها لوحدات الألعاب التي تدعم لعبة واحدة.

لتعرف في أواخر الثمانينيات نهايتها بعد تراجع في المبيعات بسبب الجودة السيئة للألعاب المنتجة، هذا ساعد في تمهيد الطريق للشركات اليابانية مثل شركة SEGA وNintendo لتحتل الأسواق العالمية.

اشتهرت هاته المرحلة باسم "سقوط شركة أتاري" أو ما يعرف ب Atari Crash.

2) مرحلة النمو: ما بين 1980 إلى منتصف التسعينيات.

مع غزو الشركات اليابانية لصناعة الألعاب تم صناعة أول وحدة ألعاب تدعم معالجات 8-bit والتي تم إنتاجها من طرف شركة Nintendo وسميت ب Famicom ليتم بعدها بعامين إنتاج نسخ أخرى تسمى NES وتم تسويقها في السوق الأمريكية. عرفت هاته الوحدات رواجا كبيرا في وقتها حتى أنها فازت بمعركة المنصات.

دامت هيمنة شركة Nintendo قرابة العامين لتعرف هي الأخرى انخفاضا في المبيعات بسبب إنتاج وحدات ألعاب مقلدة سنة 1985 في هونغ كونغ. عرفت باسم الوحدات الحمراء والبيضاء "Red and White Machine".

عرفت هاته المرحلة إنتاج أول ألعاب فيديو تحتوي على تقنية المقاطع السينمائية وتجسد ذلك في اللعبة اليابانية المسماة Tecmo's Ninja Ryukenden سنة 1983.

كما عرفت هاته المرحلة ظهور أول علاقة مباشرة بين الألعاب وترجمة السمعي البصري حيث تم ترجمة المشاهد السينمائية من اليابانية إلى الإنجليزية في اللعبة المذكورة آنفا.

3) مرحلة التطور: من منتصف التسعينيات إلى أواخر التسعينيات.

في أواخر التسعينيات بدأ ظهور أول وحدات ألعاب تدعم لغات أخرى عير اليابانية والإنجليزية هذه اللغات شملت بعض اللغات الأوروبية.

رغم ابتكار المعالجات الجديدة 16-bit إلا أنها لم تقدم الكثير من ناحية مساحة التخزين المخصصة للملفات النصية، باستثناء تحسين جودة الصوت والصورة.

عرفت هاته المرحلة في أواخر سنة 1994 إنتاج وحدة الألعاب ذات المعالج 32-bit الذي مكن من تشغيل الأقراص المضغوطة ذات مساحة التخزين المقدرة ب 640 ميجابايت.

والذي ضاعف من مساحة التخزين إلى 100 مرة لما كانت عليه في ذلك الوقت.

كما تجدر الإشارة بأن هاته المرحلة كانت الأسوء فيما يتعلق بترجمات ألعاب الفيديو.

4) مرحلة النضج: ما بين 2000 إلى 2005.

عرفت هاته المرحلة هيمنة أكبر شركات ألعاب الفيديو وهي Sony وNintendo وMicrosoft بعد سقوط شركة Sega.

عرف القرن الواحد والعشرون قفزة نوعية فيما يخص مساحة التخزين وذلك بعد الانتقال من استخدام ال CD-ROM إلى استخدام ال DVD-ROM والذي جلب معه الكثير من الإمكانيات على غرار صيغ التخزين المتاحة للملفات وأنواعها، إلا إن مساحة التخزين المحدودة المخصصة للترجمة البصرية لم تتغير.

مع ذلك فإن ظهور بعض التقنيات مثل الأصوات البشرية وتقنية الصور ثلاثية الأبعاد والمقاطع السينمائية قد ساهم في تحسين متعة اللعب التفاعلية وجعل منها أكثر واقعية.

5) مرحلة النهوض والتقدم: انطلاقا من 2005 إلى يومنا هذا.

مع ظهور الجيل السابع من وحدات الألعاب المصنعة من طرف شركة Sony وMicrosoft من خلال PS3 و Xbox 360 على التوالي.

أصيحت هاته الوحدات تدعم خاصية الاتصال بالإنترنت ووفرت مساحة تخزين كبيرة مما أثر إيجابا على عملية التوطين من ناحية الأبعاد اللغوية والثقافية والتقنية والاجتماعية.

رافق هذا التطور زيادة كبيرة في المحتوى النصي وفي المحتوى الصوتي والمحتوى المرئي الذي وجب توطينه.

اشتهرت هاته المرحلة أيضا بظهور نموذج الشحن المتزامن أو ما يعرف ب sim-ship حيث يتم إصدار اللعبة الأصلية واللعبة المترجمة في نفس الوقت

عرف ظهور الجيل الثامن من وحدات الألعاب مثل PS4 و Xbox One سنة 2016 ظهور تقنية المشاهدة فائقة الجودة 4K والتي جعلت الألعاب أكثر واقعية مما سبق وكذا ظهور وحدات التحكم عن بعد وكذا خاصية الواي فاي.

تجدر الإشارة هنا أن الجيل الثامن قد شارف على نهايته حيث أن شركة Microsoft قد أنتجت وحدة ألعابها Xbox X Series كما تعتزم شركة Sony إنتاج الجيل التاسع من وحدة الألعاب الخاصة بها PS5 مع نهاية سنة 2020.

ملخص الفصل الثاني: توطين ألعاب الفيديو

1. توطين البرامج

إن مصطلح البرامج يقصد به جميع التطبيقات التي يتم تثبيتها على جهاز الكومبيوتر بغرض إنجاز مهمة معينة مع إمكانية استعمال هاته البرامج من قبل أي شخص بتدريب قاعدي.

إن أي مستخدم لتلك البرامج ينتظر منها أن تخاطبه بلغته، بمعنى أن تلك البرامج يجب أن تُوطن إلى لغات الأسواق التي ستباع فيها. المسألة هنا ليست مسألة نخوة أو اعتزاز باللغة وإنما هي مسألة تبسيط التشغيل والاستفادة من جميع خصائص البرنامج.

من الناحية التقنية إن البرمجيات هي عبارة عن مجموعة من التعليمات والأوامر المتسلسلة التي تخبر الحاسب كيف ينفذ التعليمات البرمجية، ولذلك وجب أن يعمل البرنامج بسلاسله ودون أية أخطاء برمجية بعد توطينه إلى لغات أخرى.

عادة ما يرافق هاته البرامج ملفات تحتوي على إرشادات الاستخدام أو ما يسمى ب "دليل المستخدم"

ولذلك وجب عند توطين هاته البرامج والملفات المرفقة معها تغليب الوضوح والإيجاز على كل شيء آخر وخاصة في ترجمة واجهة المستخدم ورسائل المساعدة المنبثقة.

إن توطين البرامج لا يقتصر على الجانب اللغوي فقط وذلك بسبب الطبيعة العملية والإنتاجية للبرامج والتي لا تقتصر على الجانب التواصلي.

في اقتباس لبرنال:

> إن الخط الفاصل بين توطين البرامج وألعاب الفيديو يكمن في كون طبيعة كل منهما فمثلا البرامج ذات طبيعة إنتاجية بينما ألعاب الفيديو هي وسيلة ترفيهية تفاعلية، وهذا ما أضفى ثقلا إضافيا على خبير التوطين من ناحية العناصر التي وجب توطينها بشكل مختلف تماما، وذلك لسبب رئيسي واحد وهو طبيعة كل منهما.(ص 13)

إن برامج الحاسوب وألعاب الفيديو تشترك في عدة أشياء منها:

كلاهما يتضمن نصوص يجب ترجمتها.

كلاهما نتاج هندسة البرمجيات.

المساحة المخصصة للنصوص المترجمة محدودة في كلاهما.

كلاهما يمران على نفس مراحل التوطين الأساسية والتي تنطلق من خلال التدويل.

كلاهما يجب أن يطابقا معايير الجودة قبل الإصدار أو ما يسمى ب quality assessment.

كلاهما قد يتم يطوران بانتهاج نموذج الشحن المتزامن أو ما يعرف ب sim-ship عند مرحلة الإنتاج.

بينما يختلف توطين البرامج عن توطين ألعاب الفيديو فيما يلي:

عند توطين برامج الكومبيوتر يتم إعطاء أولوية قصوى للخاصية الوظيفية بينما في توطين ألعاب الفيديو يتم بلوغ هاته الخاصية الوظيفية بنوع من الإبداع نظرا لكون هاته الأخيرة ذات طبيعة تفاعلية ترفيهية.

تقول شاندلر:" لا يمكن توحيد المعايير بين توطين برامج الكومبيوتر وتوطين ألعاب الفيديو وذلك لان هاته الأخيرة تأتي بعدة أنواع وأصناف مختلفة ولذلك وجب انتهاج أساليب مختلفة لكل نوع منها عند التوطين".

(مقتبس من كتاب أوهاغان ص 3).

تجدر الإشارة هنا إلى أن ألعاب الفيديو تشترك مع ترجمة الشاشة أو ترجمة السمعي البصري في كون أن أغلب ألعاب الفيديو يتم ترجمتها أو دبلجتها، حيث يلاحظ أن أساليب وضوابط الدبلجة المستعملة في صناعة الأفلام والسينما تطبق على دبلجة ألعاب الفيديو أيضا.

حيث نجد أنه يتم الأخذ في الحسبان الوقت المخصص لكل مقطع صوتي أثناء ترجمة الحوار.

ولكن عندما يتعلق الأمر بالترجمة المرئية فهنالك بعض الاختلافات بين ترجمة السمعي البصري وتوطين ألعاب الفيديو. فعلى سبيل المثال تقاس الترجمة بعدد الأحرف في ترجمة السينما بينما تقاس بالبيكسل أو وحدة الصورة وذلك للاقتصاد في المساحة المخصصة للترجمة المرئية.

توطين ألعاب الفيديو

فيما يلي أهم مراحل عملية توطين ألعاب الفيديو:

1. ما قبل التوطين

ويتم في هاته المرحلة تجهيز لوازم التوطين والتي تحتوي على جميع المعلومات اللازمة في المشروع من ملفات اللعبة التي ستخضع لعملية التوطين وكذا المعلومات المساعدة في علمية الترجمة من محتوى اللعبة والحوارات بين شخصيات اللعبة. عادة ما يتم تجهيزها من قبل المطور.

تعيين منسق التوطين والذي سيشرف على عملية التوطين من أولها إلى آخرها سواء اختير في عملية التوطين مبدأ التوطين عبر الوكالات أو عبر المترجمين المستقلين.

تجهيز العمل وخلاله يقوم المترجم بالاطلاع على اللعبة والتعرف عليها من جميع النواحي إما عن طريق قراءة فحوى القصة أو مشاهدة فيديوهات اللعبة ومن ثم إنشاء قاعدة مصطلحات أو إنشاء ذاكرة ترجمة.

2. الترجمة

وتعتبر هاته المرحلة أهم المراحل على الطلاق في عملية التوطين كما تعرف أيضا بصعوبتها، إذ يتوجب على المترجم أن تتوفر فيه حنكة الراوي في الأعمال الأدبية وخبرة المخرج السينمائي في صناعة الأفلام.

ففي اقتباس عن مانجيرون:

> إن العدد الهائل للعناصر المستخرجة من ألعاب الفيديو والتي يجب ترجمتها قد لا تقع على بال أي مترجم مختص في ترجمة الأعمال الأدبية أو أي نوع من الترجمات الأخرى. فقد نجد أن لعبة فيديو واحدة تحتوي على آلاف أو مئات الآلاف من الكلمات والتي تتضمن أمثلة من اللعبة وكتيب الإرشادات والحوارات والمصطلحات التقنية والقانونية (ص152) .

تجدر الإشارة هنا أن في مرحلة الترجمة قد يُنتهج نموذج الشحن المتزامن أو نموذج الشحن البعدي Post-Gold.

3. التحرير والمراجعة

بعد الانتهاء من مرحلة الترجمة تأتي مرحلة التحرير والمراجعة حيث يتم تنقيح الترجمة من خلال مراجعة جميع الترجمات إما عن طريق المترجمين أو عن طريق تعيين خبراء تحرير من أجل ضمان سلامة اللغة والأسلوب وتجنب الأخطاء الكتابية وضمان توحيد المصطلحات في مجمل الترجمة.

4. تسجيل الأصوات

إن استعمال الأصوات الحقيقية لممثلين أصبح أكثر من ضرورة من أجل إضفاء واقعية على ألعاب الفيديو

ولذلك يتم التعاون بين المترجمين ومؤدي الأصوات لإنتاج لعبة فيديو متكاملة.

يتم خلال هذه المرحلة تسجيل حوارات الشخصيات التي تم ترجمتها في مرحلة الترجمة من قبل مؤدي الأصوات.

5. ما بعد التوطين

ويتم خلال هاته المرحلة تجميع جميع محتويات اللعبة التي تم ترجمتها وتحريرها وتسجيلها في ملف واحد وإرسالها إلى المطور أو الناشر من أجل دمجها مجددا في برنامج اللعبة ويتم ذلك عبر مرحلتين:

الدمج: ويتم خلالها دمج جميع الملفات المترجمة في برنامج اللعبة من قبل مهندسين مختصين وإصدار أول نسخة تجريبية للعبة المترجمة والتي تسمى "نسخة الألفا ".

معالجة الأخطاء والتحقق من الجودة: ويتم خلالها تجريب نسخة الألفا من قبل فريق من المختبرين وذلك للكشف والتبليغ عن أية أخطاء برمجية أو أخطاء ترجمية ناجمة عن عدم توفر السياق في مرحلة الترجمة.

غالبا ما يتم تصنيف الأخطاء إلى أخطاء متعلقة بالأداء وأخطاء متعلقة بالمطابقة وأخطاء متعلقة بسلامة اللغة.

درجات التوطين في ألعاب الفيديو

قامت شاندلر بتصنيف عملية التوطين إلى أربعة درجات وهي:

1) اللاتوطين: ويتم خلالها تسويق ألعاب الفيديو بنسخها الأصلية في الأسواق الأجنبية وذلك للتقليل من تكاليف عملية التوطين الباهظة.
2) توطين غلاف اللعبة ووثائقها المرفقة فقط: ويتم خلالها توطين غلاف اللعبة وكتيب الإرشادات دون توطين اللعبة، يَتخذ هذا الإجراء عندما يتوقع من اللعبة ألا تحقق مبيعات كبيرة في الأسواق. ما يميز هذا النوع من التوطين هو إمكانية إصدار اللعبة الأصلية واللعبة المترجمة في نفس الوقت إلى عدة أسواق أجنبية.
3) التوطين الجزئي: ويتم خلاله ترجمة غلاف اللعبة وكتيب الإرشادات والملفات النصية في اللعبة بينما يتم الإبقاء على الحوارات المتواجدة في النسخة الأصلية وبلغتها الأصلية والاكتفاء بتوفير الترجمة المرئية فقط.

4) التوطين الكلي: يعد هذا النوع من التوطين اقصى درجات التوطين وأكثرها تكلفة من الناحية المادية حيث يتم توطين جميع محتويات اللعبة انطلاقا من غلاف اللعبة وصولا إلى خدمات دعم اللاعبين، حتى أن الموقع الرسمي للعبة على الإنترنت يتم توطينه بالكامل. إن انتهاج هذا النوع من التوطين يعتمد على مدى أهمية السوق المستهدفة والأرباح المتوقعة.

ملخص الفصل الثالث: تحليل العينات المختارة في الدراسة

1. نتائج تحليل الإستبيان

يتضح من خلال تحليل المعطيات المستقاة من الإستبيان أن جل اللاعبين العرب يفضلون تشغيل النسخة الإنجليزية عوض النسخة المعربة للأسباب التالية:

- الترجمة السيئة والتي لا ترتقي إلى تطلعات اللاعب العربي. لا من ناحية اللهجة المستعملة في تسجيل أصوات الشخصيات ولا من ناحية اللغة والأسلوب في ترجمة الحوارات.
- اللغة الإنجليزية توفر متعة لعب أفضل وهذا مرتبط أساسا بالأصوات المستعملة في اللعبة حسب ردود بعض المشاركين في الإستبيان.
- السبب الثالث وهو تعليمي بحت فقد برر بعض اللاعبين أنهم يريدون تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية عن طريق ألعاب الفيديو.
- السبب الآخر هو طبيعة ألعاب الأونلاين والتي تجمع الكثير من اللاعبين من مختلف البلدان في واقع افتراضي واحد القاسم المشترك بين الجميع هو استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية للتواصل فيما بينهم.
- وأخيرا عدم توفر المحتوى العربي المتعلق باللعبة.

2. نتائج تحليل لعبة الفيديو

إن النسخ المترجمة من ألعاب الفيديو يجب أن تتوفر على جميع خصائص النسخ الأصلية من ناحية متعة اللعب وبساطة واجهة المستخدم. حيث أن الفشل في تحقيق ذلك يعطي انطباعا سيئا لدى المتلقي لهاته الألعاب.

بناء على هذا المنطلق واعتمادا على التحليلات اتضح ما يلي:

اللغة: اللعبة تحتوي على العديد من الأخطاء اللغوية والمتعلقة أساسا بقواعد كتابة همزة الوصل والقطع والهمزة المتوسطة والهمزة المتطرفة. بالإضافة إلى أخطاء متعلقة بحروف الجر والتعريف والتنكير والتأنيث والتذكير.

المصطلحات: لاحظنا عدم ثبات في ترجمة المصطلحات فمثلا مصطلح واحد يتم ترجمته بطرق مختلفة رغم تطابق السياق والوظيفة. وهذا يعود أساسا لغياب التنسيق بين مترجمي الفريق الواحد أو وجود خلل أثناء مرحلة التحقق من الجودة.

الأخطاء الكتابية: تم العثور على العديد من الأخطاء الكتابية وخاصة في حزمة التحديثات على الموقع الرسمي للعبة.

المشاكل التقنية: لاحظنا وجود الأخطاء البرمجية والتي أثرت على واجهة المستخدم ومتعة اللعب بشكل عام، والتي كانت مرتبطة أساسا للاختلاف الواقع بين طريقتي كتابة اللغة الإنجليزية واللغة العربية، حيث أن هاته الأخيرة تكتب من اليمين إلى اليسار.

3. الخاتمة

تطرقنا في هاته الدارسة إلى موضوع توطين ألعاب الفيديو إلى اللغة العربية وذلك باتخاذ لعبة (ببجي) نموذجًا.

كانت فرضياتنا مبنية على أساس أن تفضيل اللاعبين للعب ألعاب الفيديو باللغة الإنجليزية مرده هو جودة الترجمة السيئة والتي هو أساسا ناجمة عن عدم توظيف خبير في التوطين وبالفعل ما تم التوصل إليه أكد صحة فرضيتنا.

كما افترضنا أيضا أن مشاكل الترجمة البصرية في ألعاب الفيديو مردها ضيق المساحة المخصصة لاحتواء النص المترجم ومواعيد التسليم القصيرة وقد تبين كذلك أن الفرضية كانت صحيحة جزئيا، إذ أن اللعبة لم تحتوي على عدد كبير من الحوارات وبالتالي لم يكن هنالك أي إشكال متعلق بالمساحة المخصصة للترجمة بينما تحققت صحة الفرضية في شقها الثاني والمتعلق بضيق أجال التسليم حيث أن اللعبة تقوم بنشر تحديثات دورية وتحديث للمحتوى باستمرار مما يضع ثقلا كبيرا على كاهل فريق الترجمة لمواكبة زخم العمل.

افترضنا أيضا أن المشاكل المتعلقة بتوطين العناصر غير النصية مردها الاعتبارات الثقافية وبالفعل من خلال عملية التحليل والمقارنة اتضح أن الفرضية صحيحة. فعلى سبيل المثال قام مؤخرا فريق التطوير الخاص باللعبة بإصدار تحديث جديد يتضمن مهمة يجب فيها على كل لاعب السجود لتماثيل من أجل تجاوز المهمة، مما أثار موجة غضب واستنكار في العالم العربي والإسلامي مما جعل فريق التطوير يقوم بإزالة التحديث وتقديم اعتذار رسمي لكل المسلمين.

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